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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF A PREACHING DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CHURCH MEMBERS IN THE KNOXVILLE FIRST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

by

Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates

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ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Document

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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PREACHING DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING PROGRAM FOR CHURCH
MEMBERS IN THE KNOXVILLE FIRST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH

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Problem

The Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church has members endowed with the spiritual gift of speaking (preaching). However, no training program was available for these gifted members to develop and practice their preaching skills. The senior pastor, associate pastor, and guest speakers handled the preaching responsibilities, while these members were not edifying the congregation through the exercise of their preaching gift. The absence of a preaching training program also revealed a neglect of the pastoral responsibility to disciple members in the area of preaching. This project was an effort to train gifted members in the preaching craft for a potential preaching ministry and fulfill a pastoral responsibility to disciple and equip members for ministry.

Method

A six-month preaching seminar was designed and delivered in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church from March to August of 2018. Eleven members attended a two-month instructional phase and a four-month practicum phase on developing and delivering sermons. Seminar methodology included observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. Data collection involved reflective journaling, sermon reflection forms, video-recording lectures and sermons, and a seminar evaluation form.

Results

Ten regular participants and one alternate completed training. The instructor and a pastoral leader were also available as preaching mentors for trainees. Participants learned a method of sermon development. They also preached three practice sermons and were evaluated on content and delivery. Trainees developed preaching skills and increased in speaking confidence. Several participants were also interested in follow-up training, and expressed an interest in exploring future preaching opportunities.

Conclusions

Feedback from trainees revealed that the seminar was beneficial and successful. I also benefited from this training event. Lectures, preaching practice, and mentoring are essential components of preaching discipleship. To improve training, future seminars should offer (a) direct guidance from the instructor as trainees develop practice sermons, (b) shorter lectures, (c) a shorter training duration, (d) a smaller class size, and (e) sufficient practical exercises in exegesis and making appeals.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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A Project Document
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates

August 2019

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Seventh-day Adventists identify their denomination as a manifestation of the end-time remnant discussed in Revelation 12:17.¹ Knight (2008) writes, “from its very beginning Seventh-day Adventism has viewed itself as a called-out people with a prophetic mission” (p. 28). Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief 13 discusses this apocalyptic identification:

The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. This proclamation is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; it coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and results in a work of repentance and reform on earth. Every believer is called to have a personal part in this worldwide witness. (Isa. 1:9; 11:11; Jer. 23:3; Dan. 7:9-14; Micah 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 4:17; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Jude 3, 14; Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4.). (*Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, 2018, p. 185)

Given their remnant identity, Adventists view the church as a proclamation-based organization called to herald a worldwide Gospel announcement within the context of the Three Angels’ Messages (Rev 14:6-12). They see the performance of this responsibility as an end-time fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt 24:14; 28:19). Each Adventist member is invited to be involved in the global mission of the church.

¹All Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New King James Version (unless otherwise noted).

Since the earliest days of Adventism, public proclamation has been a primary avenue of extending the Adventist message. Bradford (1993) observes,

The place of preaching in the Advent Movement is secure . . . The movement (we need to recapture that word and all that it implies) owes its present position to the passion for preaching that compelled the pioneers [Seventh-day Adventist Church founders] to go and tell. The pioneers believed in preaching. They preached in churches, schoolhouses, town halls, railway stations, living rooms, barns, tents, the open air – in short, wherever they could get a hearing. (p. 7)

The Millerite Movement of the mid-19th century arose during the Great Second Advent Awakening (Schwarz & Greenleaf, 2000, pp. 23-50). This movement consisted of individuals from numerous denominations who were convinced of the imminence of the Second Advent and sensed a divine calling to share their message through public preaching and printed publications (Damsteegt, 1977, p. 53; Schwarz & Greenleaf, pp. 43-45). Many of these individuals were committed lay believers who preached the nearness of Christ's return, together with readiness for this event through conversion. Knight (2010) states,

No one knows the number of ministers preaching the Millerite message, but . . . the evidence is clear that a large number of clergy and dedicated laypeople took up the message of the advent near. Some of them preached it full time, while others sounded the warning part time in connection with earning a livelihood. (p. 95)

From its early Millerite roots, lay preaching, therefore, was one important contributor in the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Since that time lay preaching has also been a significant factor in the proclamation of the Adventist message throughout the world. Currently, the Adventist denomination is present in 213 of the 235 countries recognized by the United Nations ("2018 Annual Statistical Report," p. 91). Because public proclamation is a central means of sharing the Gospel (Rom 10:13-15; 1

Cor 1:17-21), Adventist ministry leaders need to continue this legacy of lay preaching by training members for a proclamation ministry.

Description of the Ministry Context

I currently serve as the senior pastor of the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. This congregation is a member of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. My ministry focus includes giving Bible studies, discipleship training, preaching, public evangelism, and teaching. The Conference provides an associate pastor who is responsible for youth and young adult ministries. A church board consisting of 25 members oversees the ministry activities and administrative responsibilities of the congregation.

The church has approximately 480 members, with an average weekly attendance of 200 for Sabbath services. The worship experience is predominately traditional and occasionally involves contemporary and classical Christian music. The church also sponsors the Knoxville Adventist School, a K-10 educational ministry located on the same property. The school staff consists of five full-time teachers and a part-time office manager. Its yearly enrollment ranges between 40-50 students. Two other significant church ministries are the Good Samaritan Center, a community services outreach on the church property, and the Advent House, a Seventh-day Adventist collegiate ministry center that houses the University of Tennessee's Adventist Christian Fellowship chapter.

The Knoxville First congregation consists of middle-class professional and blue-collar members. Representative groups include African-Americans, Asians, Caucasians, and Hispanics. The city of Knoxville has a population of 187,347 and is approximately 18% African-American, 2% Asian, 75% Caucasian, and 6% Hispanic (United States

Census Bureau, n.d.). Church membership more or less reflects these demographic percentages.

The church facility is located on Kingston Pike, a main traffic route running east to west through the southern section of the city. Businesses, neighborhoods, and worship centers representing several religious organizations are situated on this main route. The church is close to the University of Tennessee campus near downtown Knoxville. This location gives the congregation a visible presence in the community and offers potential evangelistic opportunities.

Statement of the Problem

I observed that several Knoxville First members may have the spiritual gift of speaking (identified as preaching from this point forward). Unfortunately, no program has provided training for members who desire to develop preaching skills. As a result, gifted members have not been encouraged, equipped, or trained to utilize their potential preaching gift.

Statement of the Task

The project task was to develop, implement, and evaluate a preaching discipleship training program in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church. This program focused on equipping a select group of members who were identified as potentially having the spiritual gift of preaching through an observed aptitude for public speaking and a willingness to lead out in worship service activities. The purpose of this program was to identify and train these members to develop preaching skills. This program also helped to fulfill my pastoral responsibility of discipleship training.

Delimitations of the Project

The seminar was limited to 12 people. Participants had to be at least 18 years old and members in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This seminar focused on sermon development and delivery. The training period for this seminar was limited to a time period of six months.

Description of the Project Process

The project process included (a) the construction of a theological foundation, (b) a review of relevant literature, (c) the methodological development of an intervention, (d) a narrative of the intervention implementation, and (e) an evaluation of the results of the intervention within the framework of a structured methodology.

Theological Reflection

The theological reflection in Chapter 2 discusses several important preaching discipleship principles from Scripture. General points presented include the Great Commission, the remnant mission and message, the priesthood of all believers, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the doctrine of spiritual gifts. Specific points presented include the spiritual gift of preaching, the relationship between personal consecration and preaching effectiveness, the importance of preaching Bible-based messages and making appeals, and the application of a biblical discipleship model.

Review of Literature

The literature review presented in Chapter 3 surveyed sources related to preaching discipleship in five areas. First, it discussed literature on spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament. Second, it consulted several preaching discipleship models developed and

implemented by pastor-scholars. Third, it reflected on sources that evaluate learning theories and teaching techniques. Fourth, it commented on literature discussing various approaches to sermon preparation. Finally, it considered source material on how to deliver effective sermons. Several insights from these sources were incorporated into the methodology and structure of the training seminar.

Methodology of the Intervention

As discussed in Chapter 4, this project is based on Christ's approach to discipleship training. The four principles of this approach are observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. Observation provided an opportunity for trainees to observe the sermons of fellow participants. Instruction involved classroom lectures on sermon discovery, development, and delivery. Application encouraged trainees to apply the lessons learned through observation and instruction by preaching three sermons to the training class. Evaluation exposed participants to the process of peer review and helped to identify sermon strengths and weaknesses. These four principles enabled participants to learn and develop preaching skills.

Structure of the Intervention

As also discussed in Chapter 4, the seminar consisted of an instructional phase and a practicum phase. The instructional phase involved a total of eight hours of classroom training. These training sessions were divided into two four-hour sessions over a two-month period and provided instruction on how to discover, develop, and deliver biblical sermons. They included exercises on textual exegesis in sermon preparation, as well as how to construct three sample sermons.

The practicum phase involved 21 hours of preaching practice, divided into seven three-hour sessions over a four-month period. Each session consisted of either four or five 30-minute sermon/feedback periods, with short breaks between messages. Trainees were required to deliver three sermons to the class. This phase concluded with a feedback and evaluation session on the effectiveness of training from the vantage point of participants and pastoral mentors. The final session offered valuable insights on seminar strengths and weaknesses, possibilities for follow-up training, and future preaching opportunities. The intervention was implemented within a six-month period, between March and August of 2018.

Implementation of the Intervention

Prior to the start of the instructional phase of training, recruiting scripts and consent forms were used to recruit and enroll participants and pastoral mentors (see Appendix A). Both groups were provided with personalized binders containing copies of their signed consent forms, outline notes of instructional lectures (see Appendix B), sermon evaluation forms (see Appendix C), a speaking gift survey (see Appendix D), and a final exam (see Appendix E). Lectures were presented with the use of visual aids, and were recorded for potential use in future seminars. Video copies of lectures were made available to participants who missed sessions so they could remain current with training. Sermons were also video recorded during the practicum phase, and each participant received copies of their individual messages.

Ten regular participants were recruited for training through a personal invitation. Two alternate participants were also recruited by a personal invitation in the event that any regular participants dropped out. Although 100% attendance for each instructional

and practicum session was not achieved, the ten regular participants and one alternate participant completed training. Nine regular participants preached the three required sermons. One regular participant delivered two of the three required sermons, and one alternate participant presented one sermon. Two sermon evaluation forms were used during the practicum phase. Pastoral mentors used a form entitled, “Christian Ministry Homiletics Grading Rubric for Preaching.” Trainees used the Knoxville First Sermon Reflection Form. I developed this second form.

Specific measures were used to ensure the accuracy, confidentiality, and integrity of the research data. Sermon evaluation forms, instructor notes in the form of journal reflections, and seminar feedback forms were carefully compiled and secured in both hard copy and electronic forms. All seminar data, including video recordings of lectures and sermons, were stored electronically on a password-protected computer. Hard copies of the data were also stored in a locked room at the church office. Chapter 5 presents a detailed narrative of the intervention implementation.

Evaluation of the Intervention

Several evaluation tools were used to measure the seminar’s effectiveness. Sermon feedback forms were used to assess preaching skill development. One-on-one mentoring sessions took place periodically between the instructor, trainees, and a pastoral mentor to discuss sermons and training effectiveness. My personal reflections from these sessions, as well as insights on instructional lectures and participant messages, were recorded in a written journal. At the conclusion of the seminar, each trainee completed a comprehensive feedback form. Data from these sources assessed the strengths and weaknesses of training. Chapter 6 presents a detailed evaluation of the intervention.

Definitions of Terms

Several terms related to preaching discipleship require definitions for the benefit of those who read this document. These terms are as follows:

Deductive Preaching expresses a truth from Scripture at the outset and demonstrates this truth through the course of a message (Carter, Duvall, and Hayes, 2005, pp. 34-36; Craddock, 2001, pp. 45-47; Williams, 2018, pp. 92-93).

Discipleship involves the process of equipping and training church members for ministry service.

Eisegesis is a process of projecting an external idea into a passage, and is generally done to support a preconceived idea not necessarily found within the text (McKim, 2014, p. 100; Soulen & Soulen, p. 60).

Evangelistic Preaching is the Christ-centered exposition of biblical doctrines and apocalyptic passages with an emphasis on becoming a devoted follower of Christ and living faithfully in the hope of His return (Burrill, 2014, pp. 32-34; Folk Enberg, 1994a, pp. 5-6; Martin, 2007, p. 23; Phillips, 2017b, p. 24).

Exegesis is the in-depth study of the historical, contextual, and grammatical features of a Bible passage to discover the central idea that the Bible writer intended to convey to the original audience (Lake, 2015, p. 6; McKim, 2014, p. 112; Robinson, 2014, p. 58; Soulen & Soulen, 2011, p. 64).

The *exegetical idea* of a preaching passage is the Bible writer's main idea for the ancient congregation at the time the passage was written (Morris, 2012b, p. 23; Robinson, pp. 39-40).

An *expository* or *textual sermon* is a message based upon the exposition of a biblical text, where the main idea and specific points are derived from the text. Every sermon, regardless of form, should have an expository foundation (Bresee, 1994, p. 7; Carter, Duvall, and Hayes, pp. 22-23, 120-121; Colon, 2010, p. 10; Edwards, 1994, p. 6; 2016b, p. 13; McKim, 2014, p. 114; Robinson, pp. 5-7; Vitrano, 1974, p. 41; 1984, pp. 12-13; Williams, 2018, pp. 83-84).

The *homiletical idea* of a preaching passage (the preaching idea) is based on its exegetical idea, and applies the universal principle of the passage to the contemporary audience (Morris, 2012b, p. 23; Robinson, pp. 69, 76-77).

Homiletics is the art and discipline of developing and delivering sermons, and includes study, research, outlining, arranging, and delivering an exposition of Scripture in a preaching or teaching context. This definition is based on insights from McKim, pp. 151-152.

Inductive Preaching unfolds a truth of Scripture as a message progresses, and leads the audience on a journey toward the discovery of this truth through the content and delivery of the sermon (Carter, Duvall, & Hayes, pp. 34-36; Craddock, 2001, pp. 47-49; McKim, p. 163; Williams, 2018, pp. 93-94).

Intervention refers to the proposed training seminar that was implemented to resolve the ministry problem identified by this project.

A *narrative* or *biographical sermon* is a discourse derived from Scripture in which spiritual lessons are identified from the actions of God and the characters involved in the account (Colon, 2010, pp. 10-11; Edwards, 2016a, pp. 13-14; Phillips, 2017a, p. 24; Williams, 2018, pp. 86-88).

Participant refers to the 12 Knoxville First church members who participated in the seminar as trainees.

Pastoral mentor refers to the two Adventist pastors who were recruited to serve as preaching coaches for training participants.

Practicum refers to the second phase of training that involved preaching practice and peer review feedback.

Preaching is the oral, public proclamation of a sermon through the personality of the preacher to motivate listeners to hear and respond to God's message and grow in their commitment to Him. This definition is based on insights from Arrais (2016c, p. 3), Bradford (1993, p. 39), Elwell (2001, p. 948), McKim (2014, p. 245), Richards (1985, p. 501), and Vitrano (1973, p. 23).

Prophetic Preaching, in contemporary homiletical literature, is a social-justice approach to preaching that speaks the truth to power, challenges the status quo by presenting God's standard of justice and equality, and energizes people for change (Brueggemann, 1978, p. 13; McMickle, 2006, pp. 2-5; Morris, 2011, pp. 6-9; Tisdale, 2010, pp. 3-10; Williams, 2018, pp. 86-87).

A *sermon* is an exposition of Scripture that conveys God's message to humanity and invites listeners to apply the message to their lives. This definition is based on insights from Bradford (1993, p. 39), Carter, Duvall, and Hayes (2005, pp. 22-23, 26), and McKim (p. 289).

A *Sermon Bullet* is a simple phrase or statement expressing the homiletical idea of a preaching passage in a manner that can be easily remembered by listeners (Arnold,

2008, p. 71; Morris, 2012b, p. 23). This definition is based on Robinson's observation that a "sermon should be a bullet" and not a "buckshot" (p. 17).

A thematic or topical sermon presents biblical evidence on a theme or topic based upon multiple passages with common subject matter to draw conclusions on what the Bible teaches about a chosen subject (Arrais, 2016a, p. 3; Colon, p. 10; Edwards, 2016b, p. 13; Phillips, 2017a, p. 24; Vitrano, 1974, p. 41; Williams, 2018, pp. 85-86).

Summary

This introduction discusses the need for a preaching discipleship program for gifted members in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church. The intervention described in this project addressed this need through the implementation and evaluation of a preaching training program. The evaluation sought to measure the effectiveness of this project with the hope that (a) it empowered trainees to begin the lifelong journey of preaching skill development, (b) it constituted an attempt to be faithful to the pastoral responsibility of equipping gifted members for a preaching ministry in the church, and (c) it will motivate other pastoral leaders to develop and implement preaching discipleship programs in their churches. I am hopeful that achieving these three goals will help Seventh-day Adventists continue the legacy of effective lay preaching.

CHAPTER 2

A THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR PREACHING DISCIPLESHIP

Introduction

This chapter surveys 10 theological principles for preaching discipleship. These 10 principles are: (a) the Great Commission; (b) the remnant mission and message; (c) the priesthood of all believers; (d) the promise of the Holy Spirit; (e) the role of spiritual gifts; (f) the spiritual gift of preaching; (g) the relationship between preaching and personal consecration; (h) the importance of Bible-based messages; (i) the necessity of making appeals in every sermon; and (j) the identification of a biblical model for discipleship training.

The Great Commission

Christ extends the responsibility of the Great Commission to every believer. This principle is discussed by Christ in the four Gospels and Acts: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt 28:19). “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are

witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:46-48). “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21). “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The structure of Acts reflects the fulfillment of Christ’s words regarding the work of the apostles and the Great Commission as stated in Acts 1:8. They first preached in Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-7:60), then in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1-12:25), and then to other parts of the world (Acts 13:1-28:31). After sharing the Gospel message in Jerusalem (Acts 5:28), the apostles “went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4), and were labeled by their Thessalonian enemies as those who “have turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6).

The Remnant Mission and Message

John’s Apocalypse describes an end-time remnant commissioned to proclaim the Gospel message to the world. This remnant consists of those “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 12:17). The “testimony” (μαρτυρίαν) is a parallel to the “witness” of Matthew 24:14 (μαρτύριον), where Christ predicted that, “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

The mission of the remnant is further amplified in the message of the Three Angels presented in Revelation 14:6-12. The first angel is “flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev 14:6). This text points to the end-time fulfillment of Matthew 24:14. This first angel commands hearers to worship the Creator, including the

biblical Sabbath (Rev 14:7). The second angel announces the fall of spiritual Babylon (Rev 14:8), and the third angel completes this three-fold testimony by exhorting people to reject the mark of the beast (Rev 14:9-11). This third angel also identifies the end-time faithful as those who “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev 14:12).

Furthermore, the expressions “to all the nations” (Matt 24:14) and “to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev 14:7) challenge us to proclaim the Gospel message across ethnic, cultural, and national boundaries to every member of the human family. Preaching is a significant factor in the accomplishment of this important mission.

The Priesthood of All Believers

The principle of the priesthood of all believers first applied to ancient Israel after the Exodus. Prior to giving the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai, God called the children of Israel to be a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exod 19:6). God commissioned this “holy nation” to be His witness to all nations during Old Testament times (Nichol, 1977, pp. 25-38; White, 1941, pp. 286, 290; 1943c, p. 371). Christ later identified the church as His chosen “nation” to represent God’s kingdom in the New Testament dispensation (Matt 21:43). Peter referred to the church as a “royal priesthood” and a “holy nation” (1 Pet 2:5, 9-10). Also identified as “Abraham’s seed” (Gal 3:29) and the “commonwealth of Israel” (Eph 2:12), this “holy nation” consists of all believers from every country on earth (Gal 3:28; cf. Rev 7:9-10). John confirmed that faithful believers are called to serve as “priests” for God (Rev 1:5-6; 5:9-10).

The priesthood of all believers is the biblical model of ministry. Every believer is called to be a priest or minister for Christ and is responsible for fulfilling a role in the

Great Commission. God calls certain individuals to full-time ministry. Others engage in ministry activities as lay persons while earning a livelihood in secular professions.

White (1940) confirms every member involvement in ministry: “Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary” (p. 195). “And everyone who is added to the ranks by conversion is to be assigned his post of duty” (White, 1948c, p. 30). She stated that the “real character of the church is measured . . . by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her persevering, faithful workers” (White, 1881, p. 161). She also observes that the “work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of the ministers and church officers” (White, 1948d, p. 117). Members are to be taught that the Great Commission is all-inclusive. Every faithful believer has a responsibility to share the Gospel message with unbelievers.

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

When Christ extended the Great Commission, He promised to empower believers with the Holy Spirit. He testified that God is more willing to provide the Holy Spirit to the faithful than earthly parents are willing to give temporal gifts to their children (Luke 11:9-13). Ten days before the Day of Pentecost, He told His disciples, “you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). When the Day of Pentecost arrived, faithful believers were “all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness . . . And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:31, 33). The apostles were successful in their work through the power of the Holy Spirit.

White (1911) confirms that the promise of the Spirit is just as much for modern Christians as it was for their counterparts in the apostolic era: “The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race . . . From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service” (p. 49). Referring to the latter rain of the Holy Spirit as the “times of refreshing” (Acts 3:19), Peter inferred from the words of the prophet Joel that Pentecost was a foreshadow of the final outpouring of the Spirit at the end of human history: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh” (Acts 2:17; cf. Joel 2:28). John described the latter rain of the Spirit through the work of a mighty angel who would light the earth with his glory by enabling faithful believers to proclaim the Three Angels’ Messages (Rev 18:1-4; 14:6-12; White, 1886, p. 450; 1950, pp. 603, 611-612). This proclamation will complete the Great Commission just prior to Christ’s return.

Christ emphasized the Spirit’s importance in the life and work of believers. White (1902) confirms that “Christ had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose in His teaching, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of His Holy Spirit” (p. 8). The Spirit is responsible for the new-birth conversion experience in responsive persons (John 3:5; 1 Cor 12:3; Titus 3:4-7). Christ’s sacrifice only becomes effectual through the Spirit’s work (White, 1940, p. 671). Therefore, in addition to His death on the cross, the Holy Spirit is the greatest gift Christ can impart to His followers: “The donation of the Holy Spirit was the greatest gift God could bestow upon finite man” (White, 2012, p. 114). “The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He [Christ] could

solicit from the Father for the exaltation of His people” (White, 1940, p. 671; see also White, 1896, p. 132; 1982, p. 143; 1983, p. 242).

In addition to conversion, there are other conditions to receiving the Holy Spirit. Believers must, (a) earnestly seek the Spirit (Luke 11:9-13; Hosea 10:12); (b) have a forgiving attitude (Mark 11:24-26); (c) experience repentance (Matt 3:7-12; Acts 2:38); (d) promote unity (Acts 2:1-4; 4:31-33); (e) be obedient to God (Acts 5:32); (f) express love for God by keeping His commandments (John 14:15-17); and (g) trust that God provides the Spirit at the opportune time (Heb 10:35-37; Jas 5:7; cf. Luke 24:49). The Spirit imparts strength for believers to live these principles. The above conditions can be summarized by the experience of self-surrender:

Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us . . . But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. (White, 1940, p. 672)

The promise of the Holy Spirit is significant because believers need an endowment of the Spirit to be faithful to Christ’s commission. Gospel proclamation is only successful when attended by the Spirit (White, 1940, pp. 671-672). Although Scripture predicts that the latter rain of the Spirit will take place at the end of history (Acts 2:17; Rev 18:1), White (1895b) encourages believers to claim this gift in the present time: “The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future, but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it” (p. 178). Believers

who desire to proclaim the Gospel message should earnestly pray for the latter rain now, because every prayer for the Spirit is accumulating for a final harvest of saved people:

When the third angel's message shall go forth with a loud voice and the whole earth shall be lightened with His glory, the Holy Spirit is poured out upon God's people. The revenue of glory has been accumulating for this closing work of the third angel's message. Of the prayers that have been ascending for the fulfillment of the promise—the descent of the Holy Spirit—not one has been lost. Each prayer has been accumulating, ready to overflow and pour forth a healing flood of heavenly influence and accumulated light all over the world. (White, 1993, p. 155)

Spiritual Gifts

In addition to making Christ's sacrifice effectual, the Holy Spirit also imparts spiritual gifts to believers (White, 1941, p. 327). These gifts are special abilities for the advancement of the Gospel message (Bryant, 1991, p. 43). The exercise of spiritual gifts results in the conversion and edification of the faithful, and thus expands the kingdom of God on earth. Gifts can be imparted at birth, as demonstrated in the cases of Jeremiah (Jer 1:5) and Paul (Gal 1:15-16), and may lie dormant until God calls a believer to ministry. In other cases, gifts are imparted and manifested at conversion and baptism (Acts 10:44-48; 19:1-7). The presence of a gift ultimately depends upon "our reception of the Spirit of God" (White, 1941, p. 327). The use of gifts and natural talents in witnessing must also be accompanied by the Spirit for success:

Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner be won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them the channel for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe. (p. 328)

Several New Testament passages identify the spiritual gifts available to believers: These passages include: (a) Romans 12:4-8: prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, mercy, and hospitality; (b) 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, and interpretation of tongues; (c) 1 Corinthians 12:28-30: apostleship, prophecy, teaching, miracles, healings, helps, government, diversities of tongues, and interpretation of tongues; (d) Ephesians 4:11: apostleship, prophecy, evangelism, pastoring, and teaching; and (e) 1 Peter 4:9-11: hospitality, speaking, and ministry. Christ and Paul also identified celibacy and exorcism as possible spiritual gifts (Matt 7:22; 19:10-12; Mark 16:17; 1 Cor 7:7-8).

The discovery of individual giftedness involves several factors: (a) personal study on the various gifts available to believers; (b) prayer for divine guidance in the process of discovery; (c) identifying skills and talents that show a possible tendency toward specific gifts; (d) identifying spiritual interests and ministry burdens that might necessitate certain gifts; (e) guidance and counsel from discerning church members; (f) confirmation from the body of Christ on the presence of gifts; (g) a desire to dedicate gifts and talents for use in God's work and not for personal gain; and (h) indications of ministry success (the conversion and edification of believers) when gifts are exercised (*A Personal Guide to Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts*, 1989, pp. 13-17; Thomas, 1999, pp. 205-209; Wagner, 2012, pp. 97-119; Zackrison, 2006, pp. 5-6).

The Preaching Gift

Peter observed, "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet 4:11). The Greek word for "speak" in this text is λαλέω (Strong, 1997, G2980, p. 44). This word is translated as "preach" in several passages (Mark 2:2; Acts 8:25; 11:19-20;

13:42; 14:25; 16:6). Other related words for speaking and preaching, along with scriptural examples of their use, include: (a) παρρησιάζομαι (Eph 6:19-20) – “speaking boldly” (Strong, 1997, G3955, p. 56); (b) κήρυγμα (1 Cor 1:21; 2:4) – “preaching” (G2782, p. 42); (c) λόγος (1 Cor 1:18; 2:4) – “speech” or “utterance” (Strong, G3056, p. 45); (d) κηρύσσω (2 Tim 4:2; Rom 10:15) – “preach” (G2784, p. 42); and (e) εὐαγγελίζω (Luke 4:43; Rev 14:6) – “preach” (Strong, G2097, p. 33).

This evidence suggests that speaking is a spiritual gift that can be exercised through public preaching. Some people possess a natural or acquired talent for public speaking. However, the talent of public speaking is to be contrasted with the preaching gift, in that the latter ability involves the proclamation of the Gospel message and results in the conversion and nurture of believers. The exercise of the speaking gift, therefore, expands and edifies the body of Christ.

Speaking is also exercised with the prophetic gift. Prophecy involves both foretelling (predicting the future) and forth-telling (speaking God’s message). Preaching is a form of prophetic forth-telling (Bryant, p. 130; Loritts, 2012, p. 42). The prophet Jeremiah preached God’s Word in the temple (Jer 26:1-7). The prophet Jonah preached God’s message to the Ninevites (Jonah 3:1-2; Matt 12:41). John the Baptist was a prophetic messenger who preached the Messiah’s advent (Matt 3:1-2; Luke 7:24-28). Paul and Barnabas preached the Gospel message as prophets (Acts 13:1-5). As the Messiah-Prophet predicted by Moses (Deut 18:15-18), Christ preached the Gospel message (Matt 4:17; 21:11; Luke 4:18-19, 24).

Apostleship, evangelism, and teaching can be exercised through the preaching gift. Christ “went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues” and “preaching the

gospel of the kingdom” (Matt 4:23). The apostles “did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:42). Apostles Peter and John were told “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” by religious leaders (Acts 4:18). As an evangelist (Acts 21:8), Philip preached the Gospel message (Acts 8:5-6, 12). He also preached Christ as the Messiah to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:35). Apostles Paul and Barnabas engaged in “teaching and preaching the word of the Lord” (Acts 15:35) during their missionary journeys. Paul told Timothy to “preach the word” and “do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim 4:2, 5). While under house arrest, Paul engaged in “preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 28:31).

The gift of exhortation also utilizes the speaking gift. John the Baptist, after proclaiming that Christ was to come in the power of the Holy Spirit, “with many other exhortations he preached to the people” (Luke 3:18). As Peter preached to the multitudes at Pentecost, “with many other words he testified and exhorted them” (Acts 2:40). After synagogue rulers in Pisidian Antioch asked for a “word of exhortation,” Paul preached Christ to the congregation (Acts 13:15-41). Preaching the Gospel message, “Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words” (Acts 15:32). Paul encouraged Titus to “Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority” (Titus 2:15). Timothy was told to “preach the word,” and “convince, rebuke,” and “exhort with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Tim 4:2).

The speaking gift is thus a primary means of advancing God’s kingdom on earth. Paul observes that it “pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe” (1 Cor 1:21). White (1948b) confirms that the “preaching of the gospel is God’s chosen agency for the salvation of souls” (p. 87). “God’s appointed

means of saving souls is through ‘the foolishness of preaching’” (5:300). Preaching is “God’s appointed means of instructing His people,” and thus should “always be highly prized” (5:298). Paul told Titus that God has “manifested His word through preaching” (Titus 1:3). The first angel’s message is to be preached with a “loud voice” to all nations (Rev 14:6-7). Paul discussed the role of preaching in salvation:

For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things! (Rom 10:13-15)

For those endowed with the speaking gift, Romans 10:13-15 conveys that being sent leads to preaching, preaching leads to hearing, hearing leads to belief, and belief leads to salvation. Believers who possess this gift are sent by God to preach the glad tidings of salvation. Given the relationship between preaching and salvation, it is vitally important for pastoral leaders to disciple believers who possess a potential speaking gift. Preaching discipleship empowers gifted church members to preach the Gospel message within the context of the Three Angels’ Messages, which will lead people to Christ and edify members for spiritual growth.

Personal Consecration and Preaching Effectiveness

Effective preaching begins with speaker consecration. Satelmajer (2010) observes that a preacher can only expect congregational credibility and effective preaching through an authentic relationship with God (p. 5). White (1948a) confirms, “In order to lead souls to the life-giving fountain, the preacher must first drink at the fountain himself” (p. 442). Although occasionally God may use the preaching of unsanctified individuals to awaken

conversion in listeners (Phil 1:15-18), the Holy Spirit especially empowers the preaching of consecrated individuals to transform lives. White (1991) notes that “a holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth” (p. 66). When preachers “exemplify the truth in their daily walk and conversation, they will exert a holy influence” upon listeners (White, 1963, p. 195).

Ezra, an Israelite teacher, realized his own heart must be consecrated to God in order to teach Scripture effectively to others: “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:10). Christ also understood the power of personal consecration: “And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth” (John 17:19). Paul discerned the connection between personal consecration and effective preaching: “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” (1 Cor 9:27). He also instructed Timothy and Titus that, as teachers and preachers of Scripture, church elders should model godly lives, and thus exemplify the truths they proclaim to their hearers (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Timothy was counseled to be “an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim 4:12).

White (1948a) warns of the potential spiritual danger of unsanctified preachers: “When the theory of the truth is repeated without its sacred influence being felt upon the soul of the speaker, it has no force upon the hearers, but is rejected as error, the speaker making himself responsible for the loss of souls” (p. 441). Citing Paul as an example, she also discusses the power of a consecrated life:

Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life

exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist. (1911, pp. 510-511)

The evidence above recommends that preaching discipleship should include instruction on the cultivation of an authentic relationship with God. Spiritual authenticity is the foundation for preacher credibility and preaching effectiveness.

Preaching Bible-Based Messages

Sermons should always proclaim God's Word. The Old Testament prophets faithfully proclaimed the Word of God, often using the phrase, "Thus says the Lord." These prophets included Moses (Exod 4:22; Judges 6:8), Joshua (Josh 24:2), Samuel (1 Sam 10:17-18), Nathan (2 Sam 7:4-5), Gad (2 Sam 24:11-12), Ahijah (1 Kgs 11:30-31), Shemaiah (1 Kgs 12:22-24), Elijah (1 Kgs 17:13-14), Elisha (2 Kgs 7:1), Isaiah (2 Kgs 19:6), Jahaziel (2 Chr 20:14-15), Zechariah (2 Chr 24:20; Zech 1:1-4), Huldah (2 Chr 34:22-24), Jeremiah (Jer 13:12-13; 19:1-3; 26:1-2; 34:1-4; 42:15, 18; Dan 9:2), Micah (Jer 26:18; Mic 2:3), Ezekiel (Ezek 2:4; 6:1-3; 20:45-47; 25:1-17; 36:1-15), Amos (1:1-15), Obadiah (1:1), Nahum (1:12), Haggai (1:3-11), and Malachi (1:1-4). Other unnamed prophets also proclaimed God's Word to Eli (1 Sam 2:27-36), Jeroboam (1 Kgs 13:1-10), and Ahab (1 Kgs 20:13-14).

New Testament messengers were also preachers of the Word. John the Baptist proclaimed this Word to Israel (Matt 3:1-4). Christ's preaching ministry focused on the Word (Mark 2:2), and He often referred to Scripture in His messages (Matt 21:42; 22:29-32; Luke 24:27, 32, 45). The apostles preached the Word everywhere they traveled (Acts

8:25; 13:5; 14:25; 15:36; 17:2; 17:13). Peter delivered a Bible-based message when he preached on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21, 29-35). Stephen referenced Scripture in his sermon before being executed (Acts 6:8-7:60). Paul encouraged Timothy to “preach the Word” (2 Tim 4:2) and cited biblical evidence to demonstrate the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ to Thessalonian Jews (Acts 17:1-4).

Scripture reveals that God’s messengers are called to preach sermons focusing on Christ, His resurrection, faith, and repentance. John the Baptist urged the necessity of repentance in preparation for the Messiah’s first advent (Matt 3:1-3). Christ preached repentance as preparation for receiving the kingdom of heaven in a spiritual sense (Matt 4:17; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 13:2-5). Peter and Paul preached repentance, faith, and Christ’s resurrection (Acts 2:22-39; 3:19-21; 4:29-33; 26:20). The central focus of the apostolic message was faith in the resurrected Jesus as the Christ and Son of God (Acts 4:1-2, 33; 8:5; 9:20; 17:18; 18:28; 2 Cor. 1:19). White (1986) confirms that faith and repentance should be included in the proclamation of the Gospel message:

The Lord desires His servants today to preach the old gospel doctrine, sorrow for sin, repentance, and confession. We want old-fashioned sermons, old-fashioned customs, old-fashioned fathers and mothers in Israel. The sinner must be labored for, perseveringly, earnestly, wisely, until he shall see that he is a transgressor of God’s law, and shall exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. (p. 19)

White (1973) also confirms that preachers should not “preach their own suppositions” (p. 214). Rather, the “words of the Bible and the Bible alone, should be heard from the pulpit,” so Scripture can “speak to the heart” (White, 1943c, p. 626). She also emphasizes that ministers in their messages must focus on Christ and salvation, and should never assume their hearers understand this subject:

Many listen to popular sermons from the pulpit and know no better than before they listened how to find Jesus and the peace and rest which their souls desire. Ministers who preach the last message of mercy to the world should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner's refuge. Many ministers think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith, with a heart all subdued by the love of God; they take it for granted that their hearers are perfectly acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention . . . The people are more ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation and need more instruction upon this all-important subject than upon any other. (1948a, p. 394)

Preaching discipleship should include instruction on the development of Bible-based messages. Participants are to be taught how to integrate Christ, His resurrection, faith, and repentance into their sermons, as these subjects are central to the plan of salvation. Because end-time remnant believers also have the specific responsibility of proclaiming the Three Angels' Messages (Rev 14:6-12), White (1948d) observes that these messages should form a basis for their preaching: "In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers . . . They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance" (p. 19).

The Importance of Making Appeals

Old Testament prophets often concluded their messages with appeals by calling their listeners to respond to God's message. Moses urged the people to "choose life, that both you and your descendants may live" (Deut 30:19). Joshua also called the Israelites to "choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve" (Josh 24:15). Ezekiel exhorted God's people to "Repent" and "turn away from your idols" (Ezek 14:6). Daniel called King Nebuchadnezzar to follow his counsel: "O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor"

(Dan 4:27). Jonah also urged the people of Nineveh to repent and turn from their evil ways (Jonah 3:1-10; Matt 12:41).

Christ made appeals to conclude His messages: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matt 11:28-30). His Olivet discourse offered a warning for believers to avoid deception (Matt 24:4-5, 23-24), and concluded with a call for the faithful to be spiritually alert as they watch for His return (Mark 13:35-37).

The apostles also made appeals to conclude their messages. Peter called his listeners to a decision for Christ: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before” (Acts 3:19-20). Paul pled for his listeners in Pisidian Antioch to exercise belief in Christ (Acts 13:38-41). He called the Athenian Aereopagus to repentance (Acts 17:30-31). He encouraged Felix and Agrippa to respond to the Gospel message (Acts 24:24-25; 26:27-28).

White (1948a) confirms the importance of making appeals: “In every discourse fervent appeals should be made to the people to forsake their sins and turn to Christ” (p. 396). She observed that, “Theoretical discourses are essential, that all may know the form of doctrine and see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole. But no discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel” (p. 394).

Moreover, because “Self-surrender is the substance of the teachings of Christ” (White, 1940, p. 523), preachers should boldly urge listeners to surrender their lives to Christ when appeals are made. The religious leaders saw the boldness of Peter and John as these two apostles urged people to receive the Savior for salvation (Acts 4:8-13). They later prayed to God for more boldness to preach the Word (Acts 4:29). Apollos boldly preached Christ in Achaia and Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28). Paul boldly preached the Gospel message in Damascus (Acts 9:27-29), Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:46), and Ephesus (Acts 19:8). He asked for prayer to continue to preach Christ with boldness, thus encouraging other preachers to be bold (Eph 6:18-20; Phil 1:12-14, 19-20). This biblical evidence recommends the importance of making appeals in every message. Appeals can take a variety of forms (i.e. standing, hand-raising, decision cards, prayer rooms, altar calls, etc.), and should always be culturally sensitive and venue appropriate.

A Biblical Discipleship Model

Christ extended the Great Commission by instructing His followers to “make disciples of all the nations” (Matt 28:19). Discipleship training is an important part of the Great Commission. Christ expects every disciple to also make disciples, and thus emulate His own example of discipling, equipping, and training believers for ministry.

In Old Testament times, the schools of the prophets functioned as discipleship training centers. Led by prophets such as Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha (White, 1943c, pp. 224-225), these schools trained youth to teach God’s Law to the Israelites (1 Sam 19:20; 2 Kgs 2:1-25; 4:38-44). These trainees were referred to as “prophets” and “sons of the prophets” in the sense that they were “divinely called to instruct the people in the works and ways of God” (White, 1952, p. 46). Therefore, “If a youth desired to search deeper

into the truths of the word of God and to seek wisdom from above, that he might become a teacher in Israel, these schools were open to him” (White, 1958, p. 593). Overall, these schools were to “promote the prosperity of the nation by furnishing it with men qualified to act in the fear of God as leaders and counselors” (White, 1952, p. 46).

Churches are called upon to train members for ministry. White (1942) observes that, “Every church should be a training school for Christian workers” (p. 149). Per Ephesians 4:11-12, Burrill (2004, pp. 74-75) and Fortune and Fortune (2009, pp. 17-18) suggest that ministry leaders endowed with apostleship, prophecy, evangelism, pastoring, and teaching should lead out in equipping members for ministry. White (1895a) thus confirms that, “Ministers should take the officers and members of the church into their confidence, and teach them how to labor for the Master” (p. 433; see White, 1943b, p. 196; 1948c, p. 19; 1991, p. 69).

Ministry leaders also need to follow a biblical model of discipleship. Using Christ as an example, this model involves four main principles. The first principle is observation. The disciples accompanied Christ on His ministry travels so they could observe and emulate how He performed ministry responsibilities. Christ Himself applied the principle of observation in His own experience. He emulated what He observed from His Father in a spiritual sense: “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner” (John 5:19).

Prophets and apostles also used observation in the discipleship process. Joshua observed Moses’ activities while training to be his successor (Exod 24:13; Num 27:18-23; Deut 34:9). Elisha accompanied Elijah to observe his ministry practices (1 Kgs 19:16-

21). Titus and Timothy traveled with Paul to observe his ministerial labors (Acts 16:1-5; Gal. 2:1-3). Realizing the importance of observation in discipleship training, Paul encouraged the Philippian believers that, “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil 4:9).

Instruction is the second discipleship principle used by Christ. He instructed the disciples on doctrinal subjects (Matt 5:2; 7:29). By providing this instruction, He taught God’s doctrines (John 7:16-17; 8:28), and the disciples would later preach these teachings to the people. Joshua also provided doctrinal instruction to Israel regarding God’s principles, based on what he had learned from Moses (Josh 4:10; 8:35; 11:15). Paul reminded Timothy of his instruction in correct doctrine, saying “you have carefully followed my doctrine” and “manner of life” (2 Tim 3:10). He also encouraged him to “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you” (1 Tim 4:16). The discipleship process should include instruction on sound biblical doctrines from Scripture.

In addition to being taught correct doctrine, preachers should also deliver sermons based upon sound doctrine. Rainer (2001, pp. 55-56) and Stainback (1974, p. 17) observe that preaching sound doctrine is crucial for church growth. Doctrines should also be presented in a relevant way so listeners discern how these teachings apply to their lives (Folkenberg, 1994a, p. 6). They can be taught effectively through illustrations based upon the familiar associations of listeners. Christ used this approach when He taught, and His listeners were later reminded of His teachings while working in their daily vocations. White (1941) confirms, “By connecting His teaching with the scenes of life, experience, or nature, He secured their attention and impressed their hearts. Afterward, as they looked

upon the objects that illustrated His lessons, they recalled the words of the divine Teacher” (p. 21). This evidence shows that preaching discipleship should include the importance of believing and teaching sound doctrine from Scripture. Because preachers should preach and teach biblical doctrines from the pulpit (Morris, 2012a, p. 5), preaching training should emphasize the importance of presenting sound doctrine from Scripture in a practical and illustrative manner.

The third discipleship principle used by Christ is application. He periodically gave His disciples ministry responsibilities to gain experience (Matt 10:1-8; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6). These opportunities allowed the disciples to apply what they learned from Christ. Paul also gave Erastus, Timothy, and Titus ministry opportunities to apply lessons he taught them about ministry. He sent Erastus and Timothy to work in Macedonia (Acts 19:22), Timothy to Corinth, Philippi, and Thessalonica (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; Phil 2:19; 1 Thess 3:1-2), and Titus to Dalmatia and Crete (2 Tim 4:10; Titus 1:4-5). Trainees gain wisdom and experience by practicing their skills. This discipleship principle also builds confidence as they see measurable results from faithful ministry labor.

A final discipleship principle used by Christ is evaluation. After returning from their ministry labors, the disciples “gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught” (Mark 6:30). Reflecting on their experiences, they evaluated their work to make improvements for greater effectiveness in the future. White (1940) confirms that they shared “their favorable and unfavorable experiences, their joy at seeing results from their labors, and their sorrow at their failures, their faults, and their weaknesses” (p. 359). Engaging in evaluation and reflection, “They talked together regarding the work of God, and the possibility of bringing greater efficiency to

the work” (p. 361). As Christ debriefed with His disciples, “He corrected their errors, and made plain to them the right way of approaching people” (p. 361), thus giving them constructive feedback on how to improve their ministry efforts.

As pastoral leaders disciple members for ministry, they should follow the four discipleship principles discussed above that Christ used in His ministry. These biblical principles are observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. I utilized these four principles during the implementation of this project.

Theological Reflection – Summary

This theological reflection has surveyed ten biblical principles, beginning with the important responsibility of the Great Commission and concluding with a biblical model of discipleship. These two principles connect with the teachings of the remnant mission and message, the priesthood of all believers, the promise of the Holy Spirit, the role of spiritual gifts, the gift of preaching, the relationship between personal consecration and effective preaching, the importance of developing and delivering Bible-based messages, and the necessity of making appeals in every sermon. These ten principles provide a theological foundation for my project methodology.

CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE RELATED TO PREACHING
DISCIPLESHIP

Introduction

This chapter reviews preaching discipleship literature. These sources provide principles that contributed to the methodology of this project. The areas covered include: (a) preaching as a spiritual gift; (b) preaching discipleship seminar models; (c) learning theories and teaching techniques; (d) insights on sermon preparation and development; and (e) insights on sermon delivery and making appeals.

Preaching and Spiritual Gifts

Various commentators present differing views on what abilities are identified as spiritual gifts, as well as how they are defined in the New Testament. Bryant (pp. 176-183), Bugbee (2005, pp. 49-51), Ford (2008, pp. 58-59), Johnson (1997, pp. 124-127), Naden (1989, pp. 51-143), Wagner (2012, pp. 52-56, 126, 226-235), and Zackrison (2006, pp. 9-11, 22-25) do not identify preaching as a spiritual gift. McRae (1976, p. 44) and Taffe (2002, pp. 65-66), however, identify speaking as a spiritual gift, and suggest that this gift is primarily exercised through public preaching. Berding (2006, pp. 179, 190) and Wagner (p. 126) also observe that preaching is a ministry ability through which other spiritual gifts are exercised.

Moreover, Bridge and Phypers (1995, p. 54), Bugbee (p. 50), Burrill (*Spiritual gifts seminar*, p. 15), Clinton (1985, p. 53), Kinghorn (1976, pp. 47-48), Modad (1989, p. 95), Wagner (pp. 52, 187), and Yohn (1981, p. 129) also suggest that preaching is a manifestation of the prophetic gift. Bugbee defines prophecy as “the divine enablement to reveal truth and proclaim it in a timely manner for understanding, correction, repentance, or edification” (p. 50).

Kinghorn claims that teaching and evangelism are also exercised through public preaching (pp. 37, 53). McRae observes that teaching requires effective communication skills (pp. 48-49), thus implying that public speaking is a necessary ability for teachers. Bugbee presents a similar suggestion, defining teaching as the “divine enablement to understand, clearly explain, and apply the Word of God, causing greater Christlikeness in the lives of listeners” (p. 51). He also equates preaching with evangelism, which he defines as the “divine enablement to effectively communicate the Gospel to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship” (p. 50). Dick and Dick (2001, p. 39) and Schwarz (2001, p. 116) concur that the evangelistic gift involves preaching.

Some commentators propose that preaching is a general gift category through which other gifts operate. Gaffin (1979) divides gifts into word (speaking) gifts and deed (service) gifts (pp. 52-53). Fortune and Fortune (2009) divide gifts into manifestation gifts, ministry gifts, and motivation gifts (pp. 15-21). Preaching gifts such as evangelism, prophecy, and teaching are categorized in the ministry group (pp. 17-18). Clinton suggests that knowledge, prophecy, teaching, and wisdom form a preaching gift category designed for church growth (p. 45). McRae observes that evangelism, exhortation, pastoring, prophesying, and teaching form the preaching gift category (p. 63). Flynn

(1994, pp. 38-39) and Satre (1988, pp. 40-66) include apostleship, evangelism, exhortation, knowledge, pastoring, prophesying, teaching, tongues, interpretation of tongues, and wisdom in the preaching gift group.

Griffiths (1979) cites Ephesians 4:11-12 as a basis to place apostleship, evangelism, pastoring, prophecy, and teaching in the preaching category (pp. 18-19). Hillman (1986) assigns 13 gifts to the preaching group: apostleship, courage, discernment, evangelism, exhortation, interpretation of tongues, knowledge, missionary work, pastoring, prophecy, teaching, tongues, and wisdom (pp. 20-67). Burrill recommends that 12 spiritual gifts involve preaching: apostleship, evangelism, exhortation, interpretation of tongues, knowledge, leadership, missionary work, pastoring, prophecy, teaching, tongues, and wisdom (*Spiritual gifts seminar*, p. 15). Thomas (1999) observes that preaching gifts include evangelism, exhortation, and teaching (pp. 61, 191-198).

Given that (a) 1 Peter 4:9-11 is a New Testament spiritual gifts passage, and (b) speaking is mentioned in this passage, I propose that preaching is a spiritual gift that also serves as an avenue to exercise other spiritual gifts. Based upon the publication, *A Personal Guide to Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts* (1989, p. 22), I produced a speaking gift survey (Appendix D) that includes the following statements: (a) “I seem to feel somewhat comfortable when speaking in front of groups.” (b) “I seem to have the ability to engage in public communication effectively.” (c) “I seem to have the ability to motivate groups of people when I speak.” (d) “I seem to have the ability to exhort, teach, and console in my speaking.” (e) “I seem to be able to publicly proclaim Scripture in a

clear and practical way.” (f) “I sense a divine burden to engage in a public preaching ministry in some capacity.”

The statements above use the following scale to determine the possible presence of a speaking gift: “1 = never/no,” “2 = seldom/probably not,” “3 = sometimes/maybe,” “4 = often/probably,” and “5 = always/yes.” The following range scale was also used to determine the potential possibility of having a speaking gift: “1-5 – not a spiritual gift,” “6-10 – most likely not a spiritual gift,” “11-15 – probably not a spiritual gift,” “16-20 – possibly a spiritual gift,” “21-25 – most likely a spiritual gift,” and “26-30 – a spiritual gift.” I developed the first scale above (1-5) for the speaking gift survey in Appendix D, based on *A Personal Guide to Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts* (p. 4).

Preaching Discipleship Seminar Models

Arnold (2008) conducted a training seminar for lay preachers in the Collegedale Community Seventh-day Adventist Church. In order to identify church members with the preaching gift, he offered a spiritual gifts inventory prior to training (p. 65). Although speaking was in his chosen inventory, he does not believe preaching is a spiritual gift. Rather, he suggests that evangelism, exhortation, knowledge, prophecy, teaching, and wisdom are exercised through preaching (p. 65).

After recruiting seven trainees, Arnold determined their level of preaching experience and proficiency (pp. 69-70, 91), and conducted four training lessons on sermon development and delivery (pp. 78-79). These four lessons emphasized: (a) a strong devotional life as a spiritual foundation for effective preaching; (b) how to exegete an audience for relevance; (c) how to exegete passages through the use of various Bible study tools; (d) how to find and use illustrations; (e) how to identify passage parameters;

(f) how to write a main sermon idea in a propositional sentence; (g) how to construct a sermon outline and manuscript; (h) how to write the sermon body, conclusion, and introduction; (i) the basic mechanics of sermon delivery; and (j) the opportunity to practice a sermon in a church prayer meeting (pp. 70-71, 91).

Post-seminar feedback from the focus group offered the following observations for seminar improvement: (a) the need for immediate feedback after preaching practice; (b) more one-on-one personal time with the instructor; (c) longer periods of in-depth training in sermon construction and delivery; and (d) regular follow-up training for encouragement, correction, and continuing education (pp. 96-97).

Belcher (2010) conducted a “Preparing to Preach” seminar for five elders in the Alexandria district of the Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (p. 99). This seminar had two parts: (a) “Preparation of the Speaker,” i.e. spiritual preparation for preaching, which involved developing a theology of preaching, and (b) “Preparation of the Sermon,” i.e. how to prepare and deliver sermons. The first part was held on a single day over a six-hour period, and involved instruction, discussion, exercises, and reflection. The second part was held over a two-day period a few months later, and involved instruction, discussion, and group interactions (pp. 101-104).

Participants were asked to preach two sermons to the focus group (pp. 105-106). The group selected one of the two messages from each participant to be delivered in their churches. This sermon was preached during a weekly prayer meeting, and they received verbal feedback from the congregation (pp. 108-110). Post-seminar feedback reflected an increase in the quality of Bible study habits, sermon development skills, and sermon delivery skills of participants (pp. 111-112). Trainees also offered two observations to

improve future seminars: (a) shorter class sessions are more effective, and (b) video-recording sermons for future review is a necessary training tool (pp. 112, 114).

Greene (2013) discovered that Seventh-day Adventist youth and young adults in Antigua had a low regard for lay preaching (p. 83). This discovery motivated him to develop a training seminar for lay preachers to address this problem. He held two 90-minute classroom sessions weekly in two locations over a three-month period (pp. 87-88). These sessions focused on the preparation and delivery of relevant, Bible-based sermons (p. 88). This initial training phase was followed by a requirement for trainees to preach sermons in their churches within a six-month period (p. 87). Thirty participants completed the training and developed two sermons by the conclusion of the seminar (pp. 88-89). Post-training feedback from a youth and young adult focus group revealed that lay-preacher sermons were more biblically based, substantive, and touching (p. 101).

Ottai (1998) developed a preaching seminar for pastors in the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Training emphasized three principles: (a) the importance of the spirituality of the preacher (pp. 92-96); (b) the importance of developing sermons that reflect faithful exegesis and congregational relevance (pp. 92, 96-98); and (c) the importance of giving sermons and making appeals with conviction, emotion, love, persuasiveness, and urgency (pp. 92, 99-103). This seminar consisted of six 50-minute sessions on a single day (p. 103). Time constraints prevented a sufficient number of role-playing and preaching exercises (p. 109). Over 100 pastors evaluated the effectiveness of the seminar, and most gave it an excellent rating (pp. 105-108).

Gibbons (1992) held a lay preacher seminar on evangelistic sermons in the Southampton Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bermuda. This seminar consisted of 17

lessons over several months to prepare trainees to preach in a public evangelistic series. Lessons involved class discussions, sermon writing exercises, preaching practice, and peer evaluations (pp. 61-63). Participants were encouraged to preach biblical messages with a sense of urgency and were allowed to deliver practice sermons a second time to incorporate feedback (pp. 47, 62-63). They also participated in monthly follow-up meetings with the instructor to prepare for an evangelistic series (p. 63). Twelve members completed training and preached in the series (pp. 61, 65). Nine members preached twice and three members preached once (p. 65). Eight people were also baptized (p. 67).

Counsell (2014) produced a doctoral project on training Muskegon Seventh-day Adventist church members to conduct evangelistic meetings in western Michigan. He observed that role-playing, practice, group feedback discussions, observation, and instructor-led evaluations were effective training tools (pp. 120-121).

Wibberding (2010) produced a training curriculum for lay pastors in the Pennsylvania Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This curriculum focused on pastoral skill development in people skills, biblical preaching, spiritual vitality, spiritual leadership, and team building (pp. 14, 65). Using a combination of class lectures, class discussions, and problem-solving exercises (p. 65), Wibberding made three important observations regarding discipleship training: (a) presenting smaller amounts of information is more effective in the learning process (p. 63); (b) practical experience facilitates learning more effectively than lectures by themselves (pp. 58, 63-64); and (c) developing a community of ministry relationships consisting of peers and mentors is an integral component of successful training programs (p. 58).

Modad (1989) offered similar observations to Counsell and Wibberding. Reflecting on lay evangelistic training for Hispanic churches in the Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, he suggests that an effective training program (a) combines theoretical and practical components; (b) uses small amounts of theoretical instruction and reserves sufficient time for practice; and (c) contains instruction in genuine spirituality as the most important component of discipleship training (pp. 81-83).

The literature surveyed in this section presents some important insights for successful preaching discipleship. These insights include: (a) focused training on personal spirituality; (b) efficient classroom lectures in terms of time, subject matter, and written material; (c) sufficient time for participant observation and skill practice; (d) recording messages for later review; (e) quality mentoring time between the instructor and participants; (f) peer evaluations; and (g) adequate follow-up training and continuing education. These seven components formed a part of the theoretical foundation for the methodology and implementation of this project.

Learning Theories and Teaching Techniques

Jensen (2008) observes that “left-brained dominant learners” prefer teaching through words, letters, instructions, and factual information, while “right-brained dominant learners” prefer the use of pictures, graphs, charts, and experiences (p. 20). Borich (2007) also observes that the most effective manner of teaching facts, rules, and action sequences is through direct instruction. This approach involves the use of examples, practice, and student-teacher feedback (p. 226), and thus engages both left-brained and right-brained learners. Spalding (2014) also recommends that shorter presentations are more effective in material retention (p. 131). Visual aids, hands-on

experience, and student-teacher interactions were used in my seminar to accommodate left-brained and right-brained learners.

Whereas 80-90% of all information absorbed by the brain is visual, Jensen confirms that instructors should “Make lectures or presentations more compelling to the brain by using objects, photographs, graphics, charts, graphs, slides, video segments, bulletin board displays, and color” (pp. 55, 57). He also observes that, “With direct instruction only, audience recall drops quickly, but with the addition of peripherals . . . long-lasting recall is generated,” because “Visuals are an important key to remembering content” (p. 57). Williams (1986) confirms that written information is more easily retained when supplemented by visual representations (p. 92).

Brown, Roediger, and McDaniel (2014) also suggest three key principles for information retention: (a) regular quizzes: a “single, simple quiz after reading a text or hearing a lecture produces better learning and remembering than rereading a text or reviewing lecture notes” (pp. 3, 29); (b) regular practice: “periodic practice arrests forgetting, strengthens retrieval routes, and is essential for hanging on to the knowledge you want to gain” (p. 4); and (c) regular updates: learning is enhanced when regularly updated with new knowledge (pp. 21-22).

Gargiulo (2007) suggests that stories are effective in the learning process: “Stories are a fundamental part of how we communicate and learn. On some level, stories are part of any experiential learning activity” (p. 223). He also notes that the “link between stories and experiences is established to explain the relationship between stories and behavior” (p. 203). Since lifestyle change is a desired result in both preaching discipleship (preachers need to first practice what they preach) and preaching effectiveness (listeners

need to apply sermon lessons), illustrative stories are an effective way to bridge the gap between learning and lifestyle.

Hands-on experience is another effective learning tool. MacKeracher (2012) confirms, “Experience plays a crucial role in all aspects of the transformative learning process” (p. 353). Williams (1986) observes, “A book, no matter how good, cannot provide the same learning as direct experience” (pp. 169-170). She observes, “If you ask a group of adults what learning experience they remember . . . the answers will usually involve two things – some form of direct experience and a moment of insight or discovery. Often the two occur together, with the experience leading to the insight” (p. 179). In the context of preaching discipleship, participants learn important lessons by preaching to their peers, because “students learn most effectively when they are actively engaged in the material at hand” (Lose, 2008, p. 42).

Preaching experience should also be supplemented with task repetition, peer group evaluations, opportunities to apply feedback, and video-recording practice sessions for later review (Connolly, 2008, pp. 113-114; Goetz, 2015, pp. 68-69; Lauber, 2007, p. 200; Lose, pp. 44-45, 49). Lauber observes, “repeating the role play allows the learners to change gears and fix mistakes. This step strongly reinforces the skills being trained and increases the chances that they will be transferred to the workplace” (p. 194).

Opportunities to practice and apply feedback allows participants to build confidence and develop skills (p. 194). In my seminar, trainees were not able to repeat their sermons immediately after the first delivery because of time constraints. However, several preaching opportunities, immediately followed by feedback sessions, helped participants identify strengths and weaknesses and incorporate suggestions in later sermons.

Lauber also confirms that the “best time to provide feedback is immediately after the skill being practiced is performed” (p. 194). Feedback should be specific and affirming to promote a safe learning environment for trainees to benefit from group input by making improvements (pp. 197, 199). Feedback also (a) provides group support for each participant, (b) allows each trainee to learn from the wisdom of the group, and (c) strengthens peer relationships (Burden & Byrd, 2013, pp. 157, 159; Connolly, p. 88).

Lauber also encourages instructor feedback in the peer review process, because expert opinions carry considerable weight with learners (p. 198). This observation identifies another important concept in the learning process: modeling (Spalding, p. 134). Because learners tend to follow and imitate teachers, instructors should consistently model what they teach. Consistency between profession and example increases the overall impact of preaching and teaching effectiveness (White, 1911, pp. 510-511).

Sermon Preparation and Development

Having interviewed 353 formerly unchurched persons, Rainer (2001) observes that the pastor, preaching, and doctrine were the biggest factors in the decision to accept Christ and join a church (pp. 55-56). Two hundred and eleven people observed that the pastor taught Scripture through preaching. One hundred and forty-seven people also expressed that the pastor’s sermons applied Scripture to their lives. One hundred and twenty-one people also discerned that their pastors projected authenticity in their lives and messages (p. 57). These statistics demonstrate that pastoral preaching with a scriptural focus, relevance, and authenticity are key factors in church growth.

Robinson (2014) suggests that biblical sermons are grounded in scriptural concepts that apply to the speaker and hearers (p. 12). As stated in Chapter 1, he also

observes that a “sermon should be a bullet” and not a “buckshot,” meaning that it should emphasize a “single dominant idea” (p. 17). This idea is derived from the exegetical idea (the biblical author’s intended meaning to the original audience, pp. 39-40) and the homiletical idea (the exegetical idea restated as a relevant, universal principle that applies to modern listeners, pp. 69, 76-77).

Willhite and Gibson (1998) confirm that effective sermons are text-centered, audience-focused, and convey a single idea (pp. 14-19). Similar to Robinson, they describe this single idea as a timeless biblical principle based upon the author’s original meaning that is applied to the modern audience (pp. 18, 78). They summarize that transformational preaching requires a preacher to (a) consistently exemplify what is preached (p. 127); (b) deliver sermon ideas that are based upon a chosen biblical passage (p. 132); (c) be connected to the parishioner’s world (pp. 132-133); and (d) apply the sermon’s main idea to real life with clarity (pp. 140-141).

Commentators also emphasize personal consecration in sermon preparation. Merida (2009) recommends that personal holiness is an important factor in the faithful proclamation of Scripture (pp. 136, 139, 150). Tewell (2003) confirms that preacher preparation “may be the most important and yet most often overlooked aspect of preaching” (p. 52). Because they “cannot take their congregations further than they have gone in their own spiritual lives,” preachers must first be right with God before exhorting their listeners to be right with God (pp. 52-53). Heisler (2007) writes, “Character, preaching, and the Holy Spirit are all intertwined and feed off one another to produce an atmosphere of credibility and integrity” (p. 83). Listeners deserve incarnational preaching – to listen to a preacher who has been transformed by what is preached (p. 98). Edwards

(2009) observes that deep preachers have a deep relationship with God (pp. 43-44, 181), practice vulnerability (pp. 174-175), and produce clear, deep, interesting, lean sermons based upon a single idea from Scripture (pp. 60-61, 163-166).

Fasol, Fish, Gaines, and West (2006) observe that effective preachers are experts on both Scripture and people. Whereas the Gospel message never changes, its manner of presentation might change to meet the “cultural persuasions” and “unique personalities” of different audiences (p. 2). They also note that preachers should be lifetime students in several areas, including (a) Scripture, (b) effective communication skills, and (c) how various personalities respond to oral communication (pp. 91-92).

For a message to be Bible-based, Carter, Duvall, and Hayes recommend a four-step “interpretive journey” in exegesis for sermon development. First, the preaching passage is understood from “their town,” i.e. the author’s intended meaning to the original audience is identified. Second, the “width of the river to cross” is measured, i.e. the differences between the original and modern audience are determined. Third, the “principizing bridge” is crossed, i.e. the timeless theological principle of the text is discovered. Finally, the passage is conveyed to “our town,” i.e. the timeless theological principle is applied to the modern congregation (p. 44). These steps are supplemented by exegeting the audience, i.e. understanding the needs of the congregation (p. 85).

Sunukjian (2007) suggests that biblical preaching is the most difficult and best enterprise for preachers. The difficulty comes from the rigorous exercise of mental and spiritual powers by preachers to exegete and apply a passage to their personal lives. However, biblical preaching is the best enterprise because a personal transformation from Scripture leads to empowered preaching and produces congregational transformation (p.

15). Carter, Duvall, and Hayes agree that biblical preaching connects Bible truth to hearers in a transformative manner (p. 117).

Literature on sermon preparation and development recommends some important principles for preaching discipleship. Sermon preparation begins with the heart and life of the preacher. Consecration and integrity should be present in the speaker's experience, so example and message are consistent. Sermon development also embraces three important principles: (a) the original meaning of a passage is established through faithful exegesis (the exegetical idea); (b) the universal principle of a passage is identified and applied to modern-day listeners in a relevant manner (the homiletical idea); and (c) members of the congregation are challenged by the preacher to apply Scripture to their personal lives.

Sermon Delivery and Appeals

White (1973) provides counsel on sermon delivery and appeals. She observed that the "manner in which the truth is presented often has much to do in determining whether it will be accepted or rejected" (p. 168). She counseled that a speaker's "voice should not be raised to a high key," and observed that "Jesus, the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, was calm, earnest, and impressive in His discourses" (p. 184). She also encouraged speakers to "Preach short, govern your voice," and "put all the pathos and melody into it you can" (p. 183). Speakers should "Never weary hearers by long discourses," and "no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel" (pp. 178, 186). Overall, the "conduct" and "conversation" of those who speak for God in the pulpit "should be of a nature that will lead men to the conclusion that these ministers are men of thought, of solidity of character, men who fear and love their heavenly father" (p. 171).

Warren (2010) observes that sermon delivery involves a visible (i.e. visual) code and an audio code. He recommends that speakers should use a pleasant speaking style and use appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, and physical gestures. He suggests that speakers should also use a proper vocal pitch, resonance, melody, and rhythm (pace). These elements should be complemented with correct habits of breathing, pronunciation, grammar, and creative language during sermon delivery (p. 67).

Finley and Finley (2013) make the following suggestions regarding sermon delivery: (a) Christ should be uplifted as the center of all doctrine (p. 79); (b) Scripture should be applied on a practical level (p. 80); (c) the saving power of Christ should be presented in every message (p. 79); (d) appeals should be made in every sermon (p. 80); (e) clear pronunciation, eye contact, and a pleasant-sounding voice should be used in delivery (pp. 82-83); (f) criticisms of individuals and groups should be avoided (p. 83); and (g) *logos* (solid biblical content), *pathos* (passion and energy), and *ethos* (likability) are important parts of effective preaching (pp. 81-82).

Toye (2013) confirms the importance of *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos* in persuasive speaking. These three principles are based upon ancient Greek rhetoric. Effective persuasion integrates *logos* (citing proof using logic and reason), *pathos* (appealing to the heart by evoking emotion), and *ethos* (projecting a likable character to the audience, pp. 13-14). He also suggests that effective persuasion includes appropriate gestures, posture, and tone of voice during delivery (p. 40).

Moreover, Toye discusses the concept of “*kairos* – the opportune moment” (p. 33). Applied in a preaching context, a speaker should learn to discern the opportune moment when the audience is at a receptive peak. An appeal should be made when this

moment is discerned by the preacher. The receptive peak of an audience is the “*kairos* moment” when an effective appeal should be made by the speaker.

Jensen observes that thoughts and feelings are inseparable in decision-making, because the ability to think is largely dependent upon the emotional state (pp. 81-83). Logical thinking can lead to rational decisions. However, the emotional state provides the passion, strength, and energy to act on decisions, especially under difficulty and stress (pp. 82-83). White (1948b) notes that “thoughts and feelings make up the moral character” (p. 310). These points suggest that, when sermon appeals are made, preachers should use logic and emotion, because these two faculties are actively involved in decision-making and character formation.

Fasol, Fish, Gaines, and West confirm the use of proper body language (i.e. facial expressions, gestures, posture, and eye contact) in non-verbal communication (pp. 101-104). They also recommend that, (a) evangelistic preaching is incomplete without an invitation to accept Christ (p. 76); (b) every message should conclude with an appeal that is introduced by a brief explanation of the Gospel message (p. 79); and (c) appeals should be clear, confident, urgent, and expectant of results (pp. 88-89). Altar calls, decision cards, inquiry rooms, and hand-raising can be used in appeals (pp. 82-87).

Heisler observes that important visual components of effective sermon delivery include proper eye contact and appropriate physical gestures (pp. 104-105). He also recommends that sermons should conclude with Spirit-led appeals (p. 120). Preachers should shun any vocal or visual aberration in delivery that could potentially draw a listener’s attention away from God (p. 102).

Literature Review – Summary

Several theoretical insights from sources surveyed in this chapter were used in the implementation of this seminar. Preaching training should (a) promote preaching as a spiritual gift; (b) involve classroom instruction on sermon development and delivery; (c) present relevant material, be reasonable in time length, and use visual aids; (d) stress that personal consecration influences preaching effectiveness; (e) include preaching practice that involves delivering sermons; (f) include peer evaluations and feedback sessions on sermon strengths and weaknesses; (g) include quality coaching time for participants by instructors and other skilled mentors; and (h) include follow-up training.

Training should also emphasize the importance of (a) personal consecration in sermon preparation; (b) faithful textual exegesis; (c) identification of congregational needs; (d) effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills in sermon delivery; and (e) making persuasive appeals in every message.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREACHING

DISCIPLESHIP INTERVENTION

Review of the Ministry Challenge

As stated in Chapter 1, the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church faced a challenge related to preaching discipleship. The senior pastor and associate pastor handle the preaching responsibilities, while members endowed with the speaking gift were not using their preaching abilities. The church had no program to equip these members for a preaching ministry. To resolve this challenge, I proposed a preaching training program for members with a potential speaking gift. This chapter discusses the methodology used to develop and implement this program. It also discusses the instruments used to evaluate skill development and seminar effectiveness.

Seminar Methodology

Seminar methodology was based on the biblical discipleship model presented in Chapter 2. Per Christ's example, this model uses observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. Christ provided opportunities for His disciples to observe how He worked in ministry. He spent quality time instructing them on biblical teachings so that they provided correct doctrinal instruction to those who heard their preaching. He sent them on ministry assignments, and thus encouraged them to apply their skills through practical

experience. He evaluated their efforts, providing them with constructive feedback on how to improve their ministry effectiveness.

This project used the biblical discipleship model proposed above. Participants observed the sermons of fellow trainees, which helped them to develop “an ear for learning new skills” (Wibberding, 2007, p. 27). Participants were also instructed on how to prepare and deliver Bible-based messages. Because Christ also “trained His disciples for service” through ministry experience (Dornbrack, 2016, p. 8), trainees learned to “reason from theory to practice” (Wibberding, 2011, p. 17) by preaching sermons to the training class. This exercise gave trainees an opportunity to apply skills. They also provided and received feedback in evaluation exercises, which identified sermon strengths and weaknesses (Wibberding, 2007, p. 27).

This methodology was used for two reasons. First, pastors are responsible for training members for ministry. de Waal (2013) observes, “an important role and function of the pastor includes that of ‘equipper’ (*katartismos*). This Greek word, found only in Ephesians 4:12, is variously translated as ‘equip’ (RSV), ‘perfect’ (KJV), or ‘prepare’ (NIV),” thus confirming that a pastor is called to be a shepherd-equipper (p. 22). Webb (2006) also confirms this responsibility in lay preaching: “Only when we as pastors consider our responsibility toward lay preaching will the best possible messages be delivered from our pulpits every week” (p. 27).

Second, preaching is a discipline learned and cultivated through discipleship training (Long, 2008, pp. 5, 16). Although “an individual may have gifts, abilities, or even a personality that supports the calling to preach,” Goetz (2016) confirms, “excellence in preaching is not an innate activity. Preaching with excellence is a learned

and developed practice” (p. 17). Arrais (2016b) also observes, “Preaching is a science that may be developed and improved by those who make appropriate preparations” (p. 5). White (1943a) notes, “Education and training are rightly regarded as an essential preparation for business life; and how much more essential is thorough preparation for the work of presenting the last message of mercy to the world! This training cannot be gained by merely listening to preaching” (p. 538). Preachers should “receive a thorough training under experienced teachers” and “put into practice the knowledge acquired . . . Nothing less than constant cultivation will develop the value of the gifts that God has bestowed for wise improvement” (pp. 538-539).

Recruitment, Consent, and Potential Risks

Christ recruited a manageable number of trainees when He chose the twelve disciples (Dornbrack, p. 8). I recruited ten Knoxville First members as regular training participants via personal invitation. I also recruited two alternate participants in case any regular participants dropped out of training. The training class consisted of male and female adults at least 18 years of age. Selection was based upon the demonstration of potential public speaking skills and an interest in preaching. No vulnerable groups were targeted for training, such as hospital patients, the mentally impaired, persons under the age of 18, pregnant women, or prisoners. No degrees of pressure, coercion, or deception were used during recruitment or training.

Christ’s discipleship approach also included mentoring. Kidder (2017) confirms, “Jesus focused a major portion of His ministry on mentoring,” because it is “rooted in the biblical principle of discipleship” (pp. 21, 25). Two Knoxville area pastors were recruited as mentors. Their homiletical experience enabled them to mentor participants. Trainees

had a safe environment to develop preaching skills as they were coached and mentored by experienced pastors (Cauley, 2009, p. 25; Coleman, 2011, pp. 127-128).

Participants and mentors also signed written consent forms prior to training. I met with each person individually to review seminar responsibilities before consent forms were signed. I emphasized that participation was voluntary. Participants and mentors were free to join or leave any training session at their discretion.

I also emphasized that participation posed a minimal level of risk. Two potential risks were: (a) the vulnerability to preach in a peer group setting; and (b) the vulnerability to receive feedback through peer review. Though minimal, these risks are necessary in discipleship training. Outside of these risks, however, no mentally or physically taxing exercises took place during training.

Phase One of Training: The Instructional Phase

The seminar title was, “The Foolishness of Preaching: How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons.” Training involved one two-month instructional phase and one four-month practicum phase. These phases ran consecutively for six months. The first phase consisted of two training sessions per month, for a total of four sessions. Each session lasted two hours and consisted of two one-hour lectures. A total of six one-hour lectures and one two-hour lecture were held during this phase.

Each one-hour lecture focused on a specific aspect of preaching skill development. Lectures 1-4 provided insights on discovering, developing, and delivering sermons. Lectures 5-6 involved class exercises on arranging a sample topical and narrative sermon. Lecture 7 involved a class exercise on conducting exegesis in sermon preparation. Trainees discovered the exegetical idea and homiletical idea of a chosen

preaching passage. These two ideas were used to develop a sermon bullet for a third sample sermon.

Lectures were supplemented by periodic feedback meetings between participants, pastoral mentors, and me. The first training phase focused on the discipleship principle of instruction. Lecture topics are listed in the schedule below:

First Phase – The Instructional Phase of Training

First Month – Session 1

Lecture 1: Theological Foundations for Preaching Discipleship

Lecture 2: Sermon Discovery: Revving the Homiletical Engine

First Month – Session 2

Lecture 3: Sermon Development: From Their Town to Our Town

Lecture 4: Sermon Delivery: Two Codes and the *Kairos* Moment

Second Month – Session 3

Lecture 5: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Part 1

Lecture 6: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Part 2

Second Month – Session 4

Lecture 7: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Part 3

Lecture 1: Theological Foundations for Preaching
Discipleship

Lecture 1 presented theological principles surveyed in Chapter 2. These principles included the Great Commission, the remnant mission and message, the priesthood of all believers, the promise of the Holy Spirit, the role of spiritual gifts, the gift of preaching,

and a biblical model of discipleship. Participants and mentors were encouraged to complete a speaking gift survey (Appendix D) on their own time.

Lecture 2: Sermon Discovery: Revving the Homiletical Engine

Lecture 2 instructed participants on defining a sermon. First, a sermon is Bible-based. Hostetler (2006) observes, “Good sermons . . . rely heavily on the Bible as God’s Word and let *it* do the talking” (p. 12). Carter, Duvall, and Hayes note that the “biblical text serves as the basis of the sermon, and the message communicated through the sermon follows closely the intended meaning of the biblical text, thus drawing its authority from that text” (p. 22).

Second, a sermon focuses on Christ and salvation. Pollard (1994) observes that sermons proclaim “what God did in Jesus Christ, what God does through Jesus Christ, and what God will do in those who love Jesus Christ” (p. 9). Cress (1995) exhorts preachers to “Point people to Jesus and to His gift of salvation. Preach the cross and the Second Coming. Tell people how to find God’s grace and to prepare for His return” (p. 27). Boyle (2004) suggests that the “common element” in the sermons of “great preachers” is the “proclamation of the saving grace and power of Jesus” (p. 34).

Third, a sermon is applicable and relevant: “Propositional truth is not sufficient to keep people. Show your audience how to apply the message of Scripture to their daily life” (Cress, p. 27). Rainer (2001) confirms that potential converts are not just “strongly desirous of learning deep biblical truths,” but “also want to know how these truths can make a difference in their lives” (p. 59). Satelmajer (2014) writes, “Sermon application is vital to sermon preparation *and* delivery,” and “occurs when the preacher presents the Biblical message in such a manner that the hearer will understand it and decide what to

do with the message” (p. 2). He also observes that preachers make the Bible relevant through faithfulness to biblical themes (1997, p. 4). Robinson (2014) notes, “While it is essential that you explain the truth of a passage, your task is not finished until you relate that passage to the experience of your hearers” (p. 57).

Finally, a sermon encourages a listener response (Pollard, p. 8). Preaching must encourage conversion and conviction in listeners through appeals to deepen their commitment to God (Finley & Finley, p. 160; Robinson, pp. 71-72). White (1948a) confirms that the “minister’s work is not done until he has urged home upon his hearers the necessity of a change of character in accordance with the pure principles of the truth which they have received” (p. 396; see Campbell, 2016, p. 16). She also observed that “There need to be far more lessons in the ministry of the Word of true conversion than of the arguments of the doctrines” (1988, p. 342).

Concerning different preaching styles, Pollard writes that the “New Testament presents two types of preaching: didactic (pastoral preaching) and kerygmatic (missionary preaching) . . . the former was directed toward the saved, while the latter was directed to the unbelieving” (p. 9). Bresee (1994) also observes that all Bible-based preaching styles are “considered variations of expository preaching” (p. 7). Bast (1986) confirms that expositional preaching is the scriptural preaching method (p. 176; see also Lake, 2005a, p. 18). Lake (2015) also recommends the following definition for Seventh-day Adventist preaching:

Seventh-day Adventist preaching . . . is the ‘spirit-empowered proclamation of a single idea from God’s Word, based on grammatical-theological exegesis and homiletical synthesis, framed in the eschatological setting of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12, resulting in cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes, first in the preacher, then in the listeners.’ (p. 6)

Participants were taught that biblical preaching, regardless of style, has a strong expository focus: “Expository preaching is preaching based on a significant Bible passage so that the sermon’s principal lessons originate in Scripture and are applied to a present human need” (Bresee, p. 7).

Lecture 2 also provided instruction on selecting sermon ideas. Arrais (2016b) observes that sermons originate “from the heart, from the preacher’s experience, and from his or her personal relationship with God” (p. 4). Stott (1982) suggests that four main factors influence the choice of a preaching passage for a sermon: (a) the liturgical factor (a church calendar, pp. 164-166), (b) the external factor (modern events and issues, pp. 166-167), (c) the pastoral factor (the needs of a congregation, pp. 167-169), and (d) the personal factor (God speaks through a text of scripture, p. 169). I propose that each of these factors also influences the preacher’s choice of a sermon idea.

Thomas (2010) also observes that sermon ideas are conceived and developed through the preacher’s “homiletical engine” (pp. 6-7). Using my own words, this engine is a process involving several parts: (a) devotional exercises that produce sermon ideas; (b) a method of recording ideas; (c) keeping a file with illustrations related to these ideas; (d) having personal contact with the congregation to identify needs; (e) community interaction for awareness of local customs, experiences, and events; and (f) adequate time in sermon production, including reading, meditation, writing, and re-writing sermons (p. 7). He notes that if this engine operates at an optimal level, it produces a continuous supply of fresh sermon ideas and results in authentic messages:

Good preachers discipline themselves to develop this engine and install it, front and center, in their lives. This engine is never off. And if the engine is well-built and in good operating condition, the number of ideas and sermons produced is endless, the quality high. Those who preach regularly well know

how much this process affects life, and that by this all-encompassing discipline and process, preachers deliver something worth listening to week by week. (p. 7)

In summary, “the homiletical engine . . . begins with the birth of an idea, then moves through the preservation of the idea, to the incubation, to its distillation, then writing and refinement to the point where it actually gets practiced and then preached” (p. 7). Thomas (2010) admonishes preachers to keep this “engine” running efficiently:

Preachers must be careful to tend to the internal dynamic that fuels preaching. They must constantly tune up and revamp their homiletical engines. There are so many things that can incapacitate it. Borrowing whole sermons from others damages it; insincerity damages it; failure to meditate and reflect, unbelief, and busyness can be deadly. Whatever the cost, preaching is too valuable a thing to be toyed with. Those who tend to the inner dynamic of preaching are worth listening to, even if their abilities are marginal. Those who allow themselves to be expedient with it become as “sounding brass and clanging symbol.” They are unworthy of the pulpit and ought to leave the preaching to others. (p. 9)

As the first part of my version of the homiletical engine, a quality devotional life (a) deepens a preacher’s experience with God, (b) produces sermon ideas, and (c) affects preaching effectiveness. Trainees were instructed on Christ’s devotional habits: “The early morning often found Him in some secluded place, meditating, searching the Scriptures, or in prayer” (White, 1942, p. 52). These habits include finding a solitary place in the early morning hours (Mark 1:35), Bible study (John 5:39; Acts 17:10-11), secret prayer (Luke 6:12), and meditation and reflection (Ps 119:15; 139:23-24).

Regarding consecration and preaching effectiveness, Dornbrack observes, “Jesus was an example of all that He taught” (p. 8). His example empowered His preaching and teaching effectiveness. White (1948b) notes that when preachers consecrate themselves to God, “a convincing power will attend their efforts to present truth to others” (p. 454; see White, 1948a, pp. 441-442, 526-527; 1986, p. 378). Because the “pulpit has no room

for phoniness,” Cress (1995) states, “Discerning people are looking for that which is genuine. If we are going to ‘talk the talk,’ we must ‘walk the walk’” (p. 27). Lake (2015) agrees that preachers “must allow the Word to transform their lives first; then – and only then – can they be used by the Holy Spirit as effective agents for change” (p. 8). Bradford (1975) observes that the “Bible must be something more to the preacher than a hunting ground for texts, it must be food for his own soul” (p. 5). “The preacher must be able to declare what he has personally found” (p. 5).

Consecration is vital because God uses preaching to expand His kingdom by winning new converts and edifying believers. Boyle confirms, “gospel preaching lifts the human soul into the presence of God” so people connect with Him “in a divine encounter that saves, energizes, and renews the soul” (p. 34). Williams (2016) observes that people are converted by the “gospel of Jesus Christ” (p. 11), which is shared through preaching (Rom 10:13-15; 1 Cor 1:21). Folkenberg (1994b) noted that the “gap between understanding salvation and experiencing its power can be closed only by gospel preaching” (p. 10). Phillips (2016) agrees that preaching brings salvation:

God invented preaching and endowed certain men and women with this gift in order to promote the gospel of salvation. Through the unction of the Holy Spirit, the dedicated early Christians brought millions to the foot of the cross. Since then, through preaching, millions more have been brought to salvation, and the practice continues today. (p. 11)

Lecture 3: Sermon Development: From Their Town to Our Town

Lecture 3 instructed participants on the steps of sermon development. Several homiletics experts advise choosing a text as a first step (Bresee, p. 8; Greidanus, 1999, p. 347; 2012, p. 410; Morris, 2012a, p. 18; 2012b, p. 22; Robinson, p. 29; Stott, p. 164). Arrais (2016b) suggests choosing a subject before selecting a text (pp. 4-5). I generally

preach topical sermons, so I instructed trainees to begin sermon development with topic selection (Campbell, 2014, p. 15; Spangler, 1976, pp. 6-7).

My steps (“foundation stones”) for topical sermon development include: (a) choose a topic; (b) consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage; (c) study the preaching passage to determine its exegetical idea; (d) form a homiletical idea and sermon bullet through the “interpretive journey” (see below); (e) select and arrange sermon points; (f) select illustrations that apply the bullet; (g) write an introduction, conclusion, and appeal; and (h) choose a sermon title.

Edwards (2016b) confirms that a “topical sermon begins with the subject” (p. 13). However, “even though the topic is selected first, a text will follow if it is to be a biblical sermon” (p. 13). He stresses that “a topical sermon . . . needs to be *biblically-based* . . . The meaning of the topic must be understood in the light of the historical and exegetical study you have made . . . To be topical without also being expository is to make a religious address rather than a sermon” (p. 13). In this approach, Arrais (2016a) observes that the passage informs the preacher about the topic: “In this type of preaching, a topic is already determined, and the appropriate text is sought out for informing the topic and formulating the sermon” (p. 3).

For reasons cited above, participants were instructed that faithful textual exegesis, “rightly dividing the Word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15), is an essential, non-negotiable step in sermon development. As discussed in Chapter 3, Carter, Duvall, and Hayes suggest the “interpretive journey” in textual exegesis, which they refer to as “going from their town to our town” (p. 44). This journey involves four steps: (a) grasping the text in “their town” (identifying the meaning of the passage, per the original author and audience); (b)

measuring the “width of the river to cross” (identifying similarities and differences between the “biblical audience” and the contemporary congregation); (c) crossing the “principlizing bridge” (identifying the universal theological principle in the passage); and (d) grasping the text in “our town” (identifying how contemporary hearers can apply the universal theological principle in their lives, p. 44).

Faithful exegesis discovers the main idea of a passage and prevents eisegesis. Sermons that convey a single idea are also more easily understood and remembered by listeners when compared to those with several ideas. Robinson notes, “Homiletics join their voices to insist that a sermon . . . embodies a single, all-encompassing concept” (p. 17). Lake (2015) confirms that the “principle of centering the sermon on a single dominant idea . . . is indispensable to good pulpit preaching” (p. 7). Edwards (2009) states, “To be biblical, every sermon needs to have an exegetically sound idea at its core” (p. 74). This exegetical idea must also be translated into a homiletical idea, a restatement of the exegetical idea in contemporary language (Lake, 2005b, p. 2). This is the sermon bullet (the preaching idea), and consists of a “simple memorable sentence that you want your hearers to remember . . . and apply to their everyday lives” (Morris, 2012b, p. 23).

Sermon content is also arranged to establish the sermon’s movements. All material that distracts from the sermon bullet is excluded. Edwards (2009) notes that preachers should be “ruthlessly selective” in the choice of material, because “Deep sermons are lean” and “profound” in their “simplicity” (pp. 166-167).

Choosing illustrations is also an important step in content selection. Effective illustrations in the form of stories relate biblical truths to listeners (Onongha, 2014, p. 24). Colon (2010) notes, “A sermon lesson is like a nail. An illustration is like a hammer

that drives the nail home” (p. 18). Participants were taught that the most effective illustrations come from their own personal experiences.

Other important steps include developing an introduction, conclusion, appeal, and title. Each should emphasize the bullet in a clear and creative manner. Robinson notes that effective introductions force listeners to pay attention (p. 120). Hostetler confirms, “You must grab your listener’s attention any way you can . . . and give them no choice but to listen from there” (p. 12). An effective conclusion ends with an appeal for listeners to take action in response to the sermon (Johnsson, 1994, p. 9; Sunukjian, p. 242), and should not introduce any new material (Robinson, p. 132). A catchy sermon title fosters listener curiosity and interest (Cress, p. 27; Sunukjian, pp. 254-255).

Once these “stones” are in place, the sermon should be written out and practiced out loud. Arrais (2016b) recommends that the message should be preached “out loud for an imaginary congregation . . . This practice will help one articulate the words, memorize the concepts, strengthen one’s performance, eliminate parts that are not as important, and help one not to be captive to an outline when presenting the message” (p. 5).

Lecture 4: Sermon Delivery: Two Codes and the Kairos Moment

Lecture 4 addressed sermon delivery. Participants learned verbal and non-verbal principles of effective communication (the audio and visual codes). Scripture should be handled with clarity and proficiency. Calculated humor designed to elicit an audience response should be avoided, while natural humor is permissible (Stevens, 2013, pp. 28-29; White, 1962, p. 318). Gestures and expressions should be appropriate and consistent (Morris & Hofer, 2006, p. 12; Phillips, 2017c, p. 24). Following Christ’s example, preachers should also use a simple vocabulary: “Jesus did not employ long and difficult

words in His discourses, but used plain language, adapted to the minds of the common people” (White, 1948a, p. 260). Cress offers the following observation:

Use simple, newspaper-style language. Everyday words communicate your faith in a language everyone can understand and in a manner that holds the attention of your listeners. While there are about 40,000 words in English, only about 8,000 of those words comprise the basic language of everyday life. Do not assume that people will understand words beyond this basic vocabulary. (p. 27)

Participants were exposed to the elements of persuasive speech (Chapter 3). *Ethos* refers to the character, credibility, and likability of the speaker (Black, 2006, p. 6; Pollard, p. 11). The “preaching stance” is related to *ethos*, and involves conviction, energy, and passion in sermon delivery (Lake, 2015, p. 7). *Logos* (logic) and *pathos* (feelings) engage mind and heart (Black, p. 6). Because the appeal is an important part of the message, *kairos* (i.e. the “opportune moment,” Toye, p. 33) implies recognizing the moment when hearers are receptive to an appeal.

Lectures 5-7: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Parts 1-3

Lectures 5-7 involved exercises in developing sample sermons. A sample topical sermon was developed in Lecture 5. Because narrative is the most common genre in the Bible, the class developed a sample narrative sermon in Lecture 6. Lecture 7 involved an exercise on discovering an exegetical idea, homiletical idea, and sermon bullet. Overall, these lectures helped participants become familiar with the steps of sermon development as they prepared to arrange three sermons for the practicum phase.

Phase Two of Training: The Practicum Phase

The second phase of training was the practicum phase. This phase incorporated the discipleship principles of observation and application. I originally planned to conduct

a pair of two-hour sessions each month during this four-month phase, for a total of eight two-hour sessions. Each session was to consist of four 20-minute sermons, four 10-minute feedback periods, and a short break between messages. I also planned a final meeting for the second hour of the eighth session. However, as discussed in Chapter 5, scheduling challenges made it necessary to revise this original schedule.

Participants were required to preach three messages and choose their own topics. They were expected to use principles of sermon development and delivery discussed during the instructional phase. They were also expected to incorporate feedback from earlier sermons into subsequent messages. Preaching experience and peer evaluations provided trainees with an opportunity to improve their preaching skills. A revised schedule for this second training phase is outlined below:

Second Phase – The Practicum Phase of Training

Third Month

Practicum Session 1: Sermons of Participants 1-4

Fourth Month

Practicum Session 2: Sermons of Participants 5-9

Practicum Session 3: Sermons of Participants 10 and 1-4

Fifth Month

Practicum Session 4: Sermons of Participants 5-8

Sixth Month

Practicum Session 5: Sermons of Participants 9-10 and 1-2

Practicum Session 6: Sermons of Participants 3-6

Practicum Session 7: Sermons of Participants 7-10

Final Meeting: Final Exam, Evaluation, and Follow-Up Options

Seminar Materials

I utilized important teaching materials in the instructional phase, including a training schedule, lecture outlines, evaluation forms, and inventories for spiritual gifts and the spiritual gift of preaching. Lectures were presented with computer-based visual aids. Participants were given video copies of their messages.

Evaluation Tools for Data Collection

Qualitative data was collected in two areas. First, two sermon evaluation forms provided data on preaching skills. A form entitled “Christian Ministry Homiletics Grading Rubric for Preaching” was used by pastoral mentors. The “Knoxville First Sermon Reflection Form” was used by participants. These two forms helped participants and pastoral mentors (a) identify sermon strengths and weaknesses, (b) develop evaluation skills, and (c) measure sermon skill development.

Second, participants completed a “Seminar Evaluation Form” to offer feedback on both phases of training. This form was completed at the conclusion of training. Data from these forms assessed the quality and effectiveness of the seminar, and offered recommendations for improving future training seminars.

Another source of qualitative data was reflective journaling. I produced written reflections (a) during and after participant sermons and feedback sessions, (b) during individual meetings with trainees and pastoral mentors, and (c) on other occasions when personal insights came to mind during training.

Each instructional and practicum session was also video recorded. Participants and pastoral mentors were aware that these recordings might be used in future seminars. Because 100% attendance was a challenge due to time demands and scheduling conflicts, participants could use recordings of missed sessions to remain current with training.

Securing Seminar Data

Seminar data was secured in two ways. First, all data was scanned and stored electronically onto my password-protected computer and backed up on a password-protected data storage drive. Second, hard copies of data were stored in a file cabinet in the church office. This cabinet is inside a locked storage room. Because the church office is a locked area, the seminar data was secured inside two separate locked entities. For purposes of this document, participants and pastoral mentors were given code names (i.e. “Participant 1,” “Pastoral Mentor 1,” etc.) to maintain anonymity. A master list of these code names was secured with the seminar data.

Main Goals of the Proposed Intervention

This seminar accomplished three goals. First, it addressed the preaching challenge in the Knoxville First Church. Second, it fulfilled my pastoral responsibility to be a shepherd-equipper in the area of preaching discipleship. Finally, it assisted trainees in preaching skill development, with the hope that they might eventually realize a preaching ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

CHAPTER 5

NARRATIVE OF THE INTERVENTION

IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter presents the project implementation narrative. Following the methodology of Chapter 4, this narrative describes recruitment and attendance, Lectures 1-7, Practicum Sessions 1-7, miscellaneous meetings, a final meeting, and data collection.

Recruitment and Attendance

Ten regular participants, two alternate participants, and two pastoral mentors were asked to participate in training. Participants were recruited with a participant recruitment script, and mentors were recruited with a pastoral mentor recruitment script. Each person read and signed a consent form prior to training. I was the training instructor.

The ten regular participants and one alternate participant completed training. During the practicum phase nine regular participants preached three sermons and one alternate participant preached one sermon. One pastoral mentor, the Knoxville First associate pastor, attended 50% of the training sessions. The other pastoral mentor did not attend on a regular basis due to other commitments.

Lecture 1

The first lecture was on Sabbath, March 10, 2018, and focused on the theological principles outlined in Chapter 2. These principles were the Great Commission, the

remnant mission and message, the priesthood of all believers, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the role of spiritual gifts. These concepts confirm that believers are called to ministry and gifted by the Holy Spirit to fulfill this responsibility.

Two additional concepts related to preaching discipleship were also presented. The first was the gift of preaching. I proposed that preaching is a spiritual gift and encouraged participants to complete a speaking gift survey on their own time. This survey was included in the training material. The second was a biblical discipleship model used by Christ. This model uses observation, instruction, application, and evaluation, and formed the methodological basis for this training seminar.

Lecture 2

The second lecture was on Sabbath, March 10, 2018, and focused on the preaching craft. I defined a sermon as a Christ-centered, Scripture-based presentation designed to teach biblical principles for proper doctrinal instruction and practical Christian living. I also defined preaching as the oral, public proclamation of a biblical sermon to motivate listeners to hear and respond to God's message and grow in their commitment to God.

Participants were also taught that a sermon has four components: (a) it is based on Scripture; (b) it emphasizes salvation through Christ; (c) it is relevant, practical, and applicable to real life; and (d) it encourages a listener response. Sermons also reflect different forms and styles. These include deductive, evangelistic, inductive, narrative, prophetic, and topical. All sermons must have an expository foundation – they must be biblically-based, regardless of form or style.

I also discussed that sermon ideas originate from several sources, including Scripture passages, personal spiritual insights, events in the church, community, or society, congregational needs, holidays and calendar events, and special topics of interest. Thomas (2010) observes that the main source of sermon ideas and their development is from what he identifies as the “homiletical engine” (p. 7), which I believe is based on a healthy devotional life. Participants were taught effective devotional habits. Proper devotional habits strengthen a preacher’s spiritual fitness, keep the homiletical engine operating to produce sermon ideas, and increase overall preaching effectiveness.

Lecture 3

The third lecture was on Sunday, March 18, 2018, and focused on my “eight foundation stones” of topical sermon development. As stated in Chapter, 4, these “stones” are: (a) select a sermon topic; (b) consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage; (c) study the passage to identify its exegetical idea; (d) develop the homiletical idea and form a sermon bullet; (e) select and arrange sermon points; (f) choose illustrations that support the sermon bullet; (g) form an introduction, conclusion, and appeal; and (h) develop a creative sermon title.

Participants were taught that textual exegesis is the most critical component of sermon development. The preacher stands between two worlds in this process – the world of the Bible writer and the modern world of the contemporary congregation. Simplifying the “interpretive journey” discussed in Chapter 4 into two main steps, I emphasized that faithful exegesis involves (a) discovering the meaning of the preaching passage in “their town,” i.e. identifying the Bible writer’s idea for their target audience at the time the text was produced (the exegetical idea), and (b) bringing the original meaning of the passage

into “our town,” i.e. applying the exegetical idea of the passage to the contemporary audience in our day (the homiletical idea). As defined in Chapter 1, the sermon bullet is the homiletical idea reworded as a simple statement that is easily remembered.

I concluded with a discussion on five sermon parts: (a) an illustration introducing the sermon bullet as the main idea; (b) an exposition of the main preaching passage; (c) sermon points from the passage that support the main idea; (d) an illustration re-emphasizing the sermon bullet to prepare for an appeal; and (e) an appeal for listeners to apply the main idea to their lives. I encouraged participants to follow these steps as they prepared sermons for the practicum phase.

Lecture 4

The fourth lecture was on Sunday, March 18, 2018, and focused on four areas of sermon delivery. These areas are: (a) verbal posture (the audio code, part 1) – preaching with tact and care, avoiding an argumentative, condescending, confrontational attitude; (b) voice and demeanor (the audio code, part 2) – preaching with a calm disposition, using a pleasant pace, tone, and volume; (c) non-verbal communication (the visual code) – preaching with proper expressions, gestures, and physical movements; and (d) appeals – concluding sermons with an earnest call for a listener response. Trainees were also taught to apply the four principles of persuasive speech from ancient Greek rhetoric (*logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*, and *kairos*) in sermon delivery.

Lecture 5

The fifth lecture was on Sabbath, April 14, 2018. This lecture was a class exercise on the development of a topical sermon on forgiveness. The main preaching passage was

Matthew 18:21-35. This passage discusses how Christ illustrated forgiveness through the parable of the unforgiving servant. He describes a king who only forgave his servant as he forgave others. The exegetical idea was, “God can only forgive someone as he or she is willing to forgive others.” The homiletical idea was, “God can only forgive our sin debt as we are willing to forgive those who sin against us.” The sermon bullet was, “Forgive and be forgiven – seventy times seven!” The “seventy times seven” concept illustrates God’s bountiful forgiveness toward us, and teaches that we should be bountiful in our forgiveness toward others. After discussing sermon points, illustrations, an introduction, a conclusion, an appeal, and a creative title (“Seventy times Seven!”), these parts were arranged into a sermon outline. This exercise familiarized participants with the steps of sermon development.

Lecture 6

The sixth lecture was on Sabbath, April 14, 2018. Similar to Lecture 5, this lecture was a class exercise on the development of a narrative sermon. The chosen preaching passage was 2 Chronicles 20:1-30. This passage describes how Jehoshaphat and Judah faced an invasion from Edom, Moab, and Ammon. After Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah engaged in fasting, prayer, and praise, God resolved this crisis by destroying their enemies without human involvement. The exegetical idea was, “When Jehoshaphat and Judah faced a crisis, they learned that the battle was not theirs to fight – it was God’s battle to fight.” The homiletical idea was, “When we face a crisis, we need to learn that the battle is not ours to fight – it is God’s battle to fight.” The sermon bullet was, “The battle is not ours – it is God’s!” We arranged sermon points, illustrations, an introduction, a conclusion, and an appeal. The class decided that the bullet should be the

sermon title. As with Lecture 5, the purpose of this exercise was to familiarize trainees with the steps of sermon development.

Lecture 7

The seventh and final lecture was on Sabbath, April 28, 2018. This lecture was a class exercise on discovering the exegetical idea and homiletical idea of Philippians 3:1-14 for a third sample sermon. The class identified the exegetical idea as, “Paul rejoiced that he had gained Christ and eternal life, and was willing to lose all earthly advantages as he pressed forward in his walk with Christ.” The homiletical idea was, “We should rejoice when we gain Christ and eternal life, and should have a willingness to lose all earthly advantages as we press forward in our walk with Christ.” The sermon bullet was, “Gain or lose, rejoice! You have Christ!” The class discussed three possible titles: (a) “Rejoice – You have Christ!” (b) “The Loss that is Gain!” (c) “Rejoice in the Loss that is Gain!” As with Lectures 5 and 6, this lecture was a helpful review for participants as they prepared sermons for the practicum phase.

Phase One Observations

Lectures 1-6 were an hour in length, and lecture 7 lasted over two hours. Participants and mentors offered comments during lectures, and each session concluded with a question-and-answer period. Except for Lecture 7 (which used a dry-erase board), media-based presentations using visual aids from my laptop computer were used in the delivery of each lecture. Originally, I had planned to give quizzes after each lecture, but time constraints prevented this from taking place.

Practicum Session 1

The first practicum session was on Sabbath, May 12, 2018. Participant 1 delivered an 18-minute message called “The Jericho Road.” This sermon was based on the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). The speaker shared that a man was injured while traveling on the road to Jericho. He was neglected by a priest and a Levite, and yet was helped by a merciful Samaritan. The action of this compassionate person confirmed Christ’s point that every person is our neighbor. The speaker suggested that this sinful world is analogous to the Jericho road. We are often hurt and encounter hurting people as we travel on the road of life. Similar to the Samaritan, listeners were encouraged to practice mercy and compassion as they expect this treatment from others.

Participant 2 preached a 13-minute message called “How to Walk on Water.” This sermon focused on Peter’s experience of walking on water (Matt 14:22-33). The speaker emphasized that Peter’s faith in Christ empowered him to walk on water. When fear replaced faith, however, Peter sank. After rescuing Peter, Christ stressed the importance of faith. The speaker applied this lesson by equating the stormy sea to our trials in life. Christ enables us to rise above our trials as our faith focuses on Him. The sermon bullet was, “Through Christ, you can walk on water!”

Participant 3 shared a 23-minute sermon entitled “What’s in Your Dirt?” This sermon focused on the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13:3-9, 18-23). The speaker discussed how Christ equated the four soil types to four different spiritual experiences – indifferent (wayside), shallow (stony), worldly (thorny), and good (fruitful). The sermon title served as the bullet and was repeated several times. Listeners were encouraged to ask the Holy Spirit to cultivate a “good soil” spiritual experience.

Participant 4 shared a 36-minute message called “Sharing Jesus in a Pagan World.” This message discussed witnessing for Christ in our neo-pagan culture. The speaker referred to three passages that discuss creation (Gen 1:1-2, Acts 17:24-34, Rom 1:20-23), and offered reflections on the creation-evolution debate. The sermon emphasized that unconditional love is the most effective Christian witness to unbelievers. Listeners were encouraged to share Christ and creation facts with skeptics in a loving manner when opportunities are available.

Practicum Session 2

The second practicum session was on Sabbath, June 9, 2018. Participant 5 gave a 26-minute message called “A Glass of Cold Water.” This sermon was based on Christ’s encounter with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well (John 4:7-15). Christ identified water as a symbol of spiritual cleansing and eternal life. Just as water quenches physical thirst, so does Christ quench spiritual thirst. Listeners were encouraged to invite Christ to quench their spiritual thirst by receiving the Holy Spirit.

Participant 6 delivered a 24-minute message called “Woman on the Moon.” This message was based on Revelation 12:1, which describes the apocalyptic symbol of a woman standing on the moon. Using imagery of “lesser lights” from creation week (Gen. 1:16), the speaker suggested that the moon is a “lesser light” reflecting the “greater light” of the sun. This imagery is analogous to the prophetic gift as the “lesser light” reflecting the “greater lights” of Christ and Scripture. Because Ellen White referred to her writings as a “lesser light” pointing to Scripture as the “greater light,” the speaker suggested that the moon symbolizes the prophetic gift as an identifying quality of the remnant church

(Rev 12:17; 19:10). Listeners were invited to consider Ellen White's writings as a supplement to Scripture and a safeguard against deception.

Participant 7 shared an 18-minute sermon called "Loving Jesus More." This sermon was based on the feast at Simon's house (Luke 7:36-50). Comparing Simon with the sinful woman who washed His feet, Christ used a parable to show that those who are forgiven for greater sins have a deeper appreciation for God's forgiveness and love. We should always view our sins as greater than those of fellow human beings. This perspective gives us a greater understanding of the bountiful forgiveness God offers us, and thus deepens our love for Him. Those present were encouraged to renew their love and appreciation for God.

Participant 8 preached a 20-minute message entitled "The Importance of Youth in God's Mission." This message was based on Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Matt 21:1-16). When Christ entered Jerusalem on a colt, people asked who He was, and the multitude referred to Him as a prophet. After cleansing the temple and healing the sick, Christ was praised as the Son of David by the children. The speaker emphasized how God can use children and youth as His disciples, and exhorted listeners to encourage youth to be involved in ministry.

Participant 9 shared a 19-minute presentation called "The Rest of the Story," titled after the famous phrase used by the late radio host Paul Harvey. This sermon focused on two passages: 2 Kings 11:1-12:21 (which surveys Joash's reign) and 2 Kings 20:20-21:18 (which surveys Manasseh's reign). The speaker stressed how their reigns began and ended in opposite ways. Joash was faithful during his reign, but the "rest of his story" reveals that he died under difficult circumstances. Manasseh was unfaithful, but

the “rest of his story” reveals that his Babylonian captivity rekindled his faith in God. Joash and Manasseh made decisions that caused their lives to conclude with opposite destinies. The title served as the sermon bullet. The appeal question was: “What is the rest of your story?” Listeners were encouraged to consider the “rest of their stories” by allowing Christ to control their destiny.

Practicum Session 3

The third practicum session was on Sabbath, June 23, 2018. Participant 10 preached a 19-minute sermon called “A Battle of the Wills.” The preaching passage was Ezekiel 11:14-20. This passage describes how Israel experienced foreign captivity because of a stony heart condition. However, God promised to rescue the Israelites from captivity and restore them in their land. He also promised to replace their stony hearts with fleshy hearts through the Holy Spirit. The sermon bullet was, “Don’t be stony – be fleshy!” The speaker emphasized that “stony” and “fleshy” are symbols of resistance and submission. The Christian walk involves a battle between the human will and God’s will. A “stony” heart resists God’s will, while a “fleshy” heart submits to God’s will. Listeners were encouraged to ask God for a “fleshy” heart that is submissive to His will.

Participant 1 gave a 25-minute message entitled “Your Soul: Is it Saved or Is it Sold?” The main preaching passage was Mark 8:34-37. The speaker emphasized that those who are willing to preserve their lives by avoiding self-denial for Christ will lose their salvation. Those who are willing to lose their lives for Christ by embracing self-denial will experience salvation. The sermon bullet was, “What is the condition of your soul? Is it saved or has it been sold?” Listeners were encouraged to choose Christ and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to follow Him.

Participant 2 presented a 17-minute sermon called “Accepted or Different?” The preaching passage was John 12:42-43. Several religious leaders in Christ’s day were convicted that He was the Messiah but refused to follow Him because they desired human acceptance more than God’s acceptance. The speaker emphasized that Christians must choose between the world’s acceptance and God’s acceptance. To be accepted by one is to be rejected by the other. The sermon bullet was, “Are you accepted by the world, or are you accepted by God?” Believers must decide to be different from the world if they are to be accepted by God, because there is no middle ground. Listeners were encouraged to be distinct from the world and choose God’s acceptance.

Participant 8 delivered a 24-minute presentation called “Doing the Impossible.” The preaching text was Philippians 4:13. Paul could do all things through Christ’s strength. The speaker emphasized that God can empower Christians to accomplish difficult tasks and resolve seemingly impossible problems in life and ministry. Three points were also emphasized. First, we must identify the difficult task God is calling us to pursue. Second, we must ask God for empowerment to accomplish this task. Finally, we must put forth our best effort to be successful, and God will supply what we are not able to do for ourselves. Listeners were encouraged to trust in God’s strength to accomplish difficult and seemingly impossible tasks in life.

Participant 4 offered a 21-minute message called “What Are We Worth?” This message discussed the parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7). The main idea was that everyone has infinite value in God’s eyes. As a result, Christ is doing everything possible for the salvation of all people. The preaching passage reveals that God is relentless and untiring in His quest to save the lost because of His infinite love for all human beings.

The shepherd who could not rest until He found the one lost sheep is indicative of Christ's desire to find and save lost souls. To illustrate this principle, the speaker shared the story of a father whose fearless and relentless resolve resulted in the successful rescue of his son, who had been trapped underneath a collapsed structure after an earthquake. Listeners were encouraged to consider their infinite worth in God's eyes and respond to Christ's desire to save them.

Practicum Session 4

The fourth practicum session was on Sabbath, July 28, 2018. Participant 5 offered a 27-minute sermon called "Stop, Look, Listen!" This message was based on 1 Samuel 3:1-14 and 1 Kings 19:8-12. These two passages discuss the experiences of Samuel and Elijah in hearing God's voice. Samuel heard God's voice as a child. Elijah also heard God's voice on Mount Horeb after running from Jezebel. The speaker emphasized that Christians should learn to discern God's voice.

Participant 6 delivered a 32-minute message entitled "A Joyful Sufferer?" This sermon was based on Psalm 13:1-6, which describes the issue of theodicy, and finds David questioning God's presence in times of sorrow and suffering. Yet, David exercised a joyful faith in God, despite his sufferings. The speaker emphasized that Christians should exercise joy in the midst of suffering, and shared a personal experience of having a mother who, while being pregnant with the speaker, chose not to have cancer surgery to ensure that her unborn child would live. The imagery of a mother's willingness to suffer with cancer to save the speaker's life finds a redemptive parallel in the suffering of Christ to save humanity. Listeners were encouraged to remain joyful in difficult times when God's presence is not easily discerned.

Participant 7 shared a 21-minute message called “Who Writes Your Quarterly?” This sermon surveyed several passages, including John 8:31-32 and Acts 17:1-12. The main emphasis was that people have an individual responsibility to acknowledge Christ and discover truth for themselves. The speaker observed that some church members are too dependent upon the Sabbath School quarterly and what they hear from the pulpit, and have not learned to fill their own lives with Scripture. The title was the sermon bullet. Listeners were encouraged to feed their lives with Scripture, and not depend upon human sources for personal spiritual growth.

Participant 3 presented a 30-minute sermon called “Why the Rush?” The main preaching passage was 1 Samuel 13:4-9. Saul was impatient and disobedient by refusing to wait for Samuel’s arrival before offering a sacrifice prior to battling the Philistines. The speaker applied this lesson by stating that we must learn to be patient and obedient in the midst of a hectic, fast-paced life. The title was the sermon bullet. Listeners were encouraged to practice patience and obedience, slow down their pace of life, and learn to find spiritual rest in Christ.

Practicum Session 5

The fifth practicum session was on Sabbath, August 4, 2018. Participant 10 preached a 27-minute message called “A Father’s Love.” The main preaching passage was Proverbs 3:11-12, which describes how God chastens His followers at times, similar to how earthly parents correct their children. This message emphasized that earthly parents at times exhibit tough love toward their children with discipline and boundaries. Children often do not appreciate tough love until they become adults and realize that boundaries are protective measures. The speaker discussed that her father was strict in

some areas of life to keep her safe during her childhood. She later realized that her father's boundaries were expressions of love. God also practices this type of discretion by giving boundaries as a safeguard. We might think God is too prohibitive at times, but we must realize that His prohibitions are for our benefit, because He has our best interest in mind. Listeners were encouraged to consider God's requirements as expressions of love, and understand that His boundaries are for our protection.

Participant 1 presented a 23-minute message called "To Tell the Truth," titled after a popular game show. The main preaching passage was John 14:1-3. This passage discusses Christ's promise of preparing mansions for the faithful, who will be gathered to heaven at His second coming. The speaker focused on the phrase, "If it were not so, I would have told you" (John 14:2). This promise, as well as all of Christ's promises, is absolute truth and should not be doubted. The title was the sermon bullet. Because Christ always tells the truth, listeners were encouraged to believe Scripture, because it exposes error and frees us from Satan's lies.

Participant 2 delivered a 19-minute message called "Speaking in Love." Several passages were referenced (Eph 4:31-32; Col 4:6; Jas 1:2-4, 19-20, 3:2, 5; 1 Pet 3:8-11). The speaker emphasized that Christians should guard their speech. This is especially true when we are treated in an unkind fashion. In these cases, we should respond in a loving manner, regardless of how we are treated. Some Christians find this difficult to practice, because most people tend to respond to others as they are treated. Listeners were encouraged to seek God's help to respond in a loving manner to unkind people.

Participant 4 offered a 33-minute sermon entitled "Six Plus One Equals Seven." The main preaching passage was Mark 9:1-7. Christ took Peter, James, and John to the

Mount of Transfiguration after six days (on the seventh day), where they witnessed His conversation with Moses and Elijah. This experience foreshadows the Second Advent. Moses represents those who are resurrected when Christ returns. Elijah represents those who are translated without dying when Christ returns. The speaker focused on the six-to-seven-day pattern, and cited other examples of this pattern from Scripture, including God's seventh-day rest after the six days of creation, Samuel's appearance to Saul on the seventh day after a six-day delay, and Joash's coronation at the age of seven after six years of hiding. Listeners were encouraged to trust that Christ's return is imminent, and practice spiritual readiness for this universal event.

Practicum Session 6

The sixth practicum session was on Sabbath, August 11, 2018. Participant 8 shared a 27-minute sermon called "God's Law and His Character." The main preaching passage was Psalm 19:7. This text discusses how God's law is perfect and has an important role in conversion. Several other passages were also referenced (Ps 82:3-4; Prov 11:5; Isa 1:17; 30:18; Dan 3:1-30). The speaker's main idea was that obedience to God's Law is based on the motive of love, and originates from an appreciation of His benevolent character. This love-based motive is contrasted with a fear-based motive. Genuine obedience emanates from a converted heart, and does not consist merely of outward actions. Listeners were called to examine their motives for obedience to God.

Participant 7 shared a 22-minute message called "The Marathon of Life." Two preaching passages were Matthew 5:48 and 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. The main sermon idea was that perfection is a life-long process and involves victorious Christian living. Following Christ's example, everyone who chooses a relationship with God can be

successful in resisting temptation through the Holy Spirit's strength. Christianity is a spiritual race won by finishing, not by coming in first place. The speaker stated, "The only way to lose in the Christian walk is to give up." Listeners were encouraged to remain engaged with Christ to press forward in the Christian walk.

Participant 6 preached a 32-minute sermon entitled, "A Call to Stand Apart." The preaching passage was Romans 12:2. This text describes how we should not be conformed to the sinful attitude of this world. Rather, we should be transformed by a renewed mind that results in the ability to live out God's will. The sermon bullet was, "What makes you so special?" The speaker noted that Seventh-day Adventists should be peculiar, special people who stand apart from the sinful attitude of this world.

Participant 3 delivered a 27-minute message called "Blood." The main preaching text was Hebrews 9:22. There can be no forgiveness for sin without the shedding of blood, because blood makes an atonement for the soul (Lev 17:11). The main idea was that Christ's blood provides an atonement for our sins. The speaker emphasized that blood is a symbol of life, as Christ's atoning blood brings spiritual life to believers. However, Christians often take Christ's blood for granted and ignore its saving merit. The sermon bullet was, "How much blood have you wasted?" Listeners were encouraged to claim the blood of Christ as the basis for forgiveness and salvation.

Practicum Session 7

The final practicum session was on Sabbath, August 25, 2018. Participant 5 shared a 34-minute sermon called "Go!" The main preaching passages were Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18-20. Both passages discuss the importance of the Great Commission. The speaker emphasized that believers should not wait for converts to come to them. Rather,

participating in the Great Commission requires going out into the community to meet the unconverted in order to witness for Christ.

Participant 10 shared a 25-minute message called “Fallen, But Saved.” The main preaching passage was Jeremiah 4:1-4. This passage discusses how God called the Israelites to return to Him through a spiritual circumcision of the heart. The speaker emphasized that God is also merciful and long-suffering toward the faithful in their battles with sin and temptation. However, some believers are often quick to criticize fellow church members for their sinful habits, rather than extending the same mercy and patience that God offers His followers. Listeners were encouraged to practice mercy and patience toward erring Christians as they expect this same treatment from God.

Alternate participant 1 delivered a 38-minute sermon called “Trust God?” Two preaching passages were Exodus 5:2 and Psalm 14:1. Three questions were asked: does God exist? Why should we trust Him? How can I trust God unless I know Him? The speaker emphasized that God reveals Himself to people through creation, providential leadings, and Scripture. After sharing several personal experiences on God’s leadings in his life, the speaker encouraged those present to trust God and pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Participant 9 presented a 22-minute sermon called “A Trial by Fire.” Preaching passages included Luke 9:54, 1 Kings 18:38, 1 Kings 19:1-12, 2 Kings 1:1-15, and 2 Kings 2:11. This sermon focused on Elijah’s association with fire. Examples include God’s fire on Mt. Carmel, the fiery chariot used in Elijah’s translation, the consumption of Ahaziah’s men with fire, and God’s fire on Mt. Horeb. The speaker emphasized three lessons from Elijah’s experience: (a) we cannot trust in emotional highs as sources of

spiritual strength; (b) there are times when God will allow us to experience low points to mold us to do His work; and (c) we can trust God to do what we cannot do for ourselves. The speaker emphasized that the example of Elijah demonstrates that, “It is in a time of our greatest weakness that we gain our greatest strength in God.”

Phase Two Observations

Each practicum session lasted approximately three hours. Given that they had little to no preaching experience prior to training, the trainees exceeded my expectations with their creativity, depth, and confidence in sermon content and delivery. The comments above are based upon my perceptions of their sermons as an instructor and listener, and have been approved by trainees for this document.

Thirty sermons were preached during the practicum phase. Some sermons had a clear sermon bullet. Approximately 50% drew the main sermon idea from the preaching passage. Most sermons had three weaknesses. First, a sermon bullet expressing the main idea was either absent or not easily discernable. Second, an explication of the preaching passage was generally superficial. These two observations reveal weak exegesis. Finally, conclusions and appeals were often rushed and lacked urgency. These weaknesses show that participants needed more training in these areas. However, trainees gained valuable preaching experience during this practicum phase.

Final Meeting

The seminar concluded with a final meeting on Monday, August 27, 2018. Participants completed a final exam covering information from the instructional phase of training. They also completed a Seminar Evaluation Form, offering feedback on seminar

strengths and weaknesses. I affirmed trainees on their sermon creativity. I also discussed the three weaknesses of most sermons mentioned above: the lack of a clear sermon bullet, weak exegesis of preaching passages, and appeals that lacked urgency. Future seminars will offer more in-depth training in these areas. Participants appreciated this feedback. They also expressed that the seminar was worth their time and energy.

Follow-up training options were also discussed. Participants suggested quarterly meetings on specialized preaching topics, including more training in the three weak areas of practicum sermons that I mentioned above. Several trainees also expressed an interest in preaching during worship services and a team-oriented evangelistic series. All agreed that training is also needed in evangelistic preaching. One trainee expressed a concern that church members might not be favorable to participant sermons, given that the church has two full-time pastors. I stressed that every member should be involved in ministry, and this includes those who have the desire and training to share their preaching gift.

Miscellaneous Meetings

In addition to the instructional lectures and practicum sessions, I also held periodic meetings with participants and pastoral mentor 1. Originally, I planned to have regular meetings with each participant and mentor, but scheduling challenges prevented this from happening. Participant meetings involved counseling on sermon development, as well as feedback on seminar quality and effectiveness. However, not all participants sought my counsel as they developed their practicum sermons. Meetings with pastoral mentor 1 involved discussions on lecture material given during the first phase of training. These meetings provided feedback on seminar strengths and weaknesses.

Data Collection

Seminar data was collected in several areas. Personal journal reflections were recorded in an electronic document on my laptop computer. Sermon feedback forms were also used to evaluate trainee sermons. Completed forms were collected after each sermon. The results were compiled on sermon summary sheets. I later met with each participant to discuss these sheets after each of their messages. I also compiled a master summary sheet at the end of training to provide participants with a final seminar grade. Participants also completed a “Seminar Evaluation Form” at the end of training. This form was helpful in evaluating seminar effectiveness. Hard copies of seminar data are stored in a locked storage room in the church office. Electronic copies are stored on my password-protected laptop computer and a password-protected data storage device.

Implementation Narrative – Summary

Several observations can be made regarding the project implementation. I anticipated that some participants would not complete training due to scheduling challenges or a change of mind. However, only one alternate participant did not complete training because of other commitments. Practicum sessions also required a greater time investment than originally planned. Some practicum sessions had to be rescheduled. There were also occasional challenges with recording sermons.

The final exam was an open notebook test. Participants who took the exam without their notebooks received a scaled grade to make them comparable with the scores of those who took the exam with their notebooks. I calculated a final seminar grade for each participant based on an average of the three sermon grades and the final exam grade. Overall, I was thankful for the participation of each trainee. I anticipate regular follow-up

training for participants to further develop preaching skills. I hope to provide preaching opportunities for willing participants in worship services and evangelistic meetings.

CHAPTER 6

PROJECT EVALUATION AND LEARNINGS

Summary of the Project Manuscript

Twelve church members participated in a preaching training seminar in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church. They were recruited by personal invitation because they demonstrated preaching potential prior to the seminar and expressed a desire to learn preaching skills. They were taught how to develop and deliver sermons. This seminar fulfilled my pastoral responsibility to train members for ministry.

The first phase of training (instructional) used the discipleship principle of instruction. This involved lectures on sermon development and delivery. Participants learned that sermon ideas come from various sources. The most prolific source is the preacher's devotional life. The spiritual disciplines of daily Bible study, prayer, and reflection deepen the preacher's relationship with God, generate sermon ideas, and make preaching effective.

Participants were also taught that sermons are used by the Holy Spirit to transform listeners through the power of Scripture. In this process, a preaching passage is faithfully studied and presented by the speaker. Proper exegesis, therefore, is an essential step in sermon development, and helps the preacher to avoid eisegesis. Exegesis involves discovering the main idea of a passage from the view of the Bible writer and the original congregation (the exegetical idea), and applying this idea to both the preacher and the

congregation (the homiletical idea). Participants were taught that this idea should be expressed in a sermon bullet, a key phrase summarizing the idea in a manner easily remembered. These steps are followed by choosing and arranging sermon points, illustrations, an introduction, a conclusion, an appeal, and a sermon title.

Participants were also taught skills in sermon delivery. An effective delivery involves the use of verbal and non-verbal communication. Delivery skills include the proper use of the voice, a simple vocabulary, and appropriate expressions and gestures. Additionally, I also referred to principles of persuasion from the ancient Greek rhetorical tradition (*logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*, and *kairos*).

The second phase of training (practicum) used the discipleship principles of observation, application, and evaluation. Trainees developed three sermons and preached them to the training class. They received verbal and written feedback, evaluated the sermons of fellow trainees, and integrated class suggestions to improve their preaching skills in subsequent messages.

The evaluation process involved collecting qualitative and quantitative data. Written evaluations of trainee sermons were completed by the instructor, participants, and a pastoral mentor. I also took notes during the sermons and verbal feedback sessions. This written data was used to produce sermon summary sheets for each sermon. These summaries contained average scores on content and delivery, as well as feedback on strengths and areas for improvement. Participants also gave verbal feedback on training effectiveness during individual meetings with the instructor. I recorded this feedback in a journal. At the end of training, participants also completed a written “Seminar Evaluation Form.” This provided additional insights on seminar content and quality.

Description of the Evaluation

This section discusses how the intervention data presented in Chapter 5 was evaluated and interpreted to determine training effectiveness. Observations are also provided on seminar strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluation Method

Five tools were used to evaluate the training seminar: (a) personal reflections from both phases of training; (b) individual meetings with participants and mentors that provided feedback on training effectiveness; (c) two sermon evaluation forms used in the practicum phase; (d) a “Seminar Evaluation Form” completed by participants at the end of the seminar; and (e) a final exam assessing content retention by trainees. Data from these tools revealed what training elements were effective and offered suggestions on what elements needed improvement or change for future training seminars.

Interpretation of the Data in Chapter 5

The data confirmed that the instructional phase was necessary. Participants needed instruction on how to develop and deliver sermons. The lecture format was an effective delivery method. During lectures trainees were free to ask questions and make comments. Each lecture began with a brief review of important points from prior lectures. I also provided detailed lecture outlines for each presentation. Trainees found the reviews and outlines helpful. Lectures were also video recorded for later use.

The data also confirmed that the practicum phase was necessary. I allowed participants to choose their sermon topics to ease them into the preaching discipline. They practiced delivering sermons and received feedback in order to improve their

preaching skills. Sermons were delivered in the Knoxville First church sanctuary.

Trainees requested this location to become familiar with pulpit preaching.

Participants also expressed that peer evaluations and mentoring were beneficial. Evaluations identified preaching strengths and weaknesses and revealed whether or not sermon ideas were presented clearly. Trainees focused their attention on the sermons of fellow participants to provide objective evaluations. By giving and receiving feedback, trainees sharpened their skills in preaching, observation, and evaluation. As the instructor, I was regularly involved in the mentoring process. I met periodically with several participants to provide guidance in sermon development.

Conclusions Drawn From the Data in Chapter 5

The Sermon Evaluation Form provided evaluations in three areas: (a) a general seminar evaluation; (b) an evaluation of the instructional phase; and (c) an evaluation of the practicum phase. Trainees used the following scale in response to statements in the three areas mentioned above: 0 = no opinion, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

In the general evaluation category, the following ten statements and their average scores were as follows:

1. "The seminar met my expectations." (4.5)
2. "The seminar content was very helpful." (4.7)
3. "The format of the seminar was effective." (4.4)
4. "The instructor had a good grasp of the material." (5.0)
5. "The seminar handouts and materials were very helpful." (4.7)
6. "The seminar sessions were reasonable in terms of time length." (4.2)

7. "The overall length of the seminar was reasonable." (3.9)
8. "The sermon evaluation forms were easy to use." (3.6)
9. "The size of the class in terms of participants was just right." (4.1)
10. "The pastoral mentoring team was helpful to me." (3.5).

The average rating was 4.3 out of 5 (86%). The five lowest averages reveal that participants recommended shorter training sessions, a shorter seminar length, a user-friendly sermon reflection form, a smaller class size, and more effective mentoring.

In the instructional phase evaluation, the following five statements and their average scores were:

1. "The instructional lectures on preaching were very helpful." (4.4)
2. "The visual aids were professional and interesting." (4.8)
3. "The written outlines accurately summarized the material." (4.9)
4. "The instructor was open to questions and feedback." (5.0)
5. "The instructor thoroughly explained the required assignments." (4.8)

The average rating was 4.8 out of 5 (96%). The lowest average reveals that participants recommended more helpful training lectures.

In the practicum phase evaluation, the following five statements and their average scores were:

1. "The preaching practicum sessions were very helpful to me." (4.8)
2. "The debriefing/feedback sessions were very helpful to me." (4.4)
3. "My preaching abilities improved during the seminar." (4.6)
4. "I learned important skills in evaluating myself and others." (4.5)

5. “Feedback on my preaching weaknesses was tactfully given.” (4.7)

The average rating was 4.6 out of 5 (92%). The lowest average reveals that participants recommended improving feedback sessions. Because it is too subjective, the third evaluation statement should be replaced with either, “I learned a method of sermon preparation” or “I sensed that my preaching confidence increased with each sermon.”

Overall, data from the Sermon Evaluation Form confirms that trainees viewed the instructional and practicum phases as beneficial and successful. The average rating of the general evaluation (86%), phase one evaluation (96%), and phase two evaluation (92%) was 91% (see Appendix F).

Outcomes of the Intervention

Trainees gave positive feedback on seminar content and methodology. They learned a method of sermon preparation and practiced their delivery skills by preaching sermons to the training class. Their confidence increased with each sermon preached. The average sermon grades of most participants also increased with each message.

Summary of Chapter Conclusions

This section summarizes the theological, theoretical, and methodological conclusions from Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Together with those drawn from Chapter 5, these conclusions form the basis for some overarching conclusions.

Theological Conclusions – Chapter 2

The Great Commission (Matt 28:19) is the broad theological foundation for this seminar. An end-time remnant (Rev 12:17), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is called

to engage in the Great Commission by proclaiming the Three Angels' Messages (Rev 14:6-12). This calling fulfills Christ's prediction that the Gospel message will be preached to the world just prior to His return (Matt 24:14).

The priesthood of all believers (1 Pet 2:9) teaches that all church members are called to ministry. Christ promises the gift of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:9-13), who imparts spiritual gifts for ministry success (Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:8-10, 28-30). Certain gifts, including the pastoral gift, are exercised to train and equip believers for ministry (Eph 4:11-12). Preaching is also a spiritual gift (1 Pet 4:10-11). This gift involves the public proclamation of the Gospel message. The Spirit works through this gift to produce the experience of salvation in responsive people (Rom 10:13-15; 1 Cor 1:17-21).

Because (a) certain gifts are exercised to train members for ministry (Eph 4:11-12), and (b) some members are gifted with preaching potential, I concluded that pastoral leaders are responsible for preaching discipleship. I also concluded that the discipleship process involves four principles used by Christ: observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. Preaching skills are developed under experienced pastors by (a) observing sermons, (b) receiving instruction on the preaching craft, (c) applying lessons learned by preaching practice sermons to gain experience, and (d) evaluating skills through feedback, mentoring, and reflection.

A theology of preaching discipleship also includes three additional conclusions. First, because consecration impacts preaching effectiveness, the influence of preaching increases as preachers grow in their practice of the spiritual disciplines that are part of an active devotional life (Bible study, prayer, and reflection). Second, because God's Word transforms lives, preachers must present Bible-based messages. Finally, because appeals

encourage sermon application, preachers must conclude every sermon with an appeal for listeners to apply the message to their lives.

Theoretical Conclusions – Chapter 3

Spiritual gifts literature reveals varying opinions on the preaching gift. Sources included Berding (2006), Bridge and Phypers (1995), Bryant (1991), Bugbee (2005), Burrill (*Spiritual Gifts Seminar*), Clinton (1985), Dick and Dick (2001), Flynn (1994), Ford (2008), Fortune and Fortune (2009), Gaffin (1979), Griffiths (1979), Hillman (1986), Johnson (1997), Kinghorn (1976), McRae (1976), Naden (1989), *A Personal Guide to Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts* (1989), Satre (1988), Schwarz (2001), Taffe (2002), Thomas (1999), Wagner (2012), Yohn (1981), and Zackrison (2006). Some sources suggest that preaching is either (a) an ability that exercises certain spiritual gifts, (b) a category for specific gifts, or (c) a legitimate gift that involves public preaching. I concluded that preaching is both a gift and an avenue to exercise other spiritual gifts.

Preaching seminars conducted by Arnold (2008), Belcher (2010), Counsell (2014), Gibbons (1992), Greene (2013), Modad (1989), Ottai (1998), and Wibberding (2010) utilized key training concepts for effective preaching discipleship. These include (a) an appropriate amount of classroom instruction; (b) training on personal spirituality and devotional habits; (c) preaching practice; (d) peer evaluations; (e) recording messages for later review; (f) mentoring under experienced instructors; and (g) follow-up training. These elements were included in my training seminar.

I also surveyed sources on learning theories and teaching techniques, including Borich (2007), Brown, Roediger, and McDaniel (2014), Burden and Byrd (2013), Connolly (2008), Gargiulo (2007), Goetz (2015), Jensen (2008), Lauber (2007), Lose

(2008), MacKeracher (2012), Spalding (2014), and Williams (1986). These sources recommend the use of visual aids, hands-on practice, regular student-instructor interactions, video-recording, and post-lecture quizzes. The first four recommendations were included in my training seminar.

Homiletics sources provided insights on sermon preparation, development, delivery, and appeals. These included Carter, Duvall, and Hayes (2005), Edwards (2009), Fasol, Fish, Gaines, and West (2006), Finley and Finley (2013), Heisler (2007), Merida (2009), Rainer (2001), Robinson (2014), Sunukjian (2007), Tewell (2003), Warren (2010), White (1911, 1948b, 1973), and Willhite and Gibson (1998). These sources suggest that (a) sermon preparation begins with preacher consecration; (b) biblical sermons are based upon the original meaning and universal theological principle of a passage; (c) preachers must apply the passage to their own lives as well as to modern listeners; (d) application involves understanding the needs of the congregation for relevancy and transformation; and (e) appeals should be made in every sermon.

Toye (2013) offered insights on persuasive speech, based on four principles of Greek rhetoric: (a) *logos* (appealing to the logic of the mind); (b) *pathos* (appealing to the emotion of the heart); (c) *ethos* (projecting passion, energy, and a likeable disposition), and (d) *kairos* (calling for a decision at the opportune moment when listeners are at a receptive peak). I concluded that these principles can be applied in a Christian context to delivering effective sermons and making persuasive appeals.

Methodological Conclusions – Chapter 4

Seminar methodology was based on four discipleship principles used by Christ: observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. Participants were taught how to

develop and deliver sermons and applied these lessons by preaching practice sermons to the training class. They also observed and evaluated the sermons of fellow trainees and received peer and instructor feedback on their preaching strengths and weaknesses.

Theological and theoretical principles discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 also contributed to the methodology of this project. Several sources provided insights for success in the preaching craft. de Waal (2013) and Webb (2006) observe that discipleship is a pastoral responsibility. Cauley (2009), Coleman (2011), and Kidder (2017) emphasize that mentoring (coaching) is a necessary part of the discipleship process. Arrais (2016b), Goetz (2016), Long (2008), and White (1943a) confirm that preaching skills can be developed through proper training. Dornbrack (2016) and Wibberding (2007, 2011) suggest important aspects of effective preaching discipleship.

Bradford (1975), Cress (1995), Lake (2015), and White (1942, 1948a, 1948b, 1986) offer observations on consecration and preaching effectiveness. Boyle (2004), Folkenberg (1994b), and Phillips (2016) confirm that preaching awakens salvation. The qualities of effective sermons are also discussed by Bast (1986), Boyle (2004), Bresee (1994), Campbell (2014), Carter, Duvall, and Hayes (2005), Cress (1995), Finley and Finley (2013), Hostetler (2006), Lake (2005a, 2015), Pollard (1994), Rainer (2001), Robinson (2014), Satelmajer (1997, 2014), and White (1948a, 1988).

Arrais (2016b), Stott (1982), and Thomas (2010) discuss sermon ideas. Important steps in sermon development are also discussed by Arrais (2016a, 2016b), Bresee (1994), Campbell (2014), Carter, Duvall, and Hayes (2005), Edwards (2009), Edwards (2016b), Greidanus (1999, 2012), Johnsson (1994), Lake (2005b, 2015), Morris (2012a, 2012b), Robinson (2014), Spangler (1976), Stott (1982), and Sunukjian (2007). Colon (2010) and

Onongha (2014) discuss the importance of using illustrations and stories. Black (2006), Cress (1995), Lake (2015), Morris and Hofer (2016), Phillips (2017c), Pollard (1994), Stevens (2013), Toye (2013), and White (1948a, 1962) provide counsel on effective sermon delivery.

Overarching Conclusions

Five overarching conclusions can be made from this project. First, a divine responsibility rests upon pastoral leaders to disciple church members for ministry. Because most churches have members with the speaking gift, this responsibility includes preaching discipleship. Every church should conduct preaching training for gifted members under the supervision of homiletically-proficient pastors.

Second, successful preaching discipleship involves observation, instruction, application, and evaluation as a methodology. Trainees should have opportunities to observe how sermons are preached, receive instruction on sermon development and delivery, apply their skills by delivering practice sermons for preaching experience, and engage in evaluation by giving and receiving feedback.

Third, because (a) preaching effectiveness is related to personal consecration, and (b) consecration is cultivated through healthy devotional habits, preaching discipleship should include instruction on a healthy devotional life. The daily practice of Bible study, prayer, and reflection deepens a preacher's relationship with Christ, produces a steady flow of sermon ideas, and intensifies the impact of preaching.

Fourth, because the Holy Spirit transforms lives through the power of God's Word, sermons must be based on an accurate interpretation of Scripture. Preaching discipleship should include instruction on how to conduct faithful exegesis. Once a

preaching passage is chosen, the speaker should identify the exegetical idea (the author's original meaning) and the homiletical idea (an application of this meaning to the contemporary congregation). Faithful exegesis enables the preacher to avoid eisegesis by forming an accurate interpretation of the passage and applying it to their listeners.

Finally, mentoring is critical to successful preaching discipleship. Because guidance is needed in passage selection, sermon development, and sermon delivery, participants benefit from the input of experienced instructors. Regular meetings between participants and mentors also provide opportunities for feedback on preaching skill development and overall training effectiveness.

Personal Transformation

Project success is partially measured by its impact on me as a preaching and teaching pastor. As a preaching pastor, arranging and teaching the training material has strengthened my approach to sermon development. Seminar instruction on devotional habits and textual exegesis have also strengthened my Bible study habits. I spend more time in sermon preparation, and more consistently produce sermons from fresh biblical material. I also discern an increased intentionality regarding the expression of a single, dominant idea in my sermons. My messages also reveal a recognizable sermon bullet that originates from an accurate exegesis of the chosen preaching passage. I am also less dependent on sermon notes. This provides greater freedom to speak in a conversational style from the pulpit. I sense an overall increase in enthusiasm, passion, and spiritual energy in my preaching.

As a teaching pastor, I have a deepened sense of responsibility to train church members for ministry. Whereas instruction in theological and theoretical principles are

necessary, I have learned that practical exercises on textual exegesis and developing sample sermons are important aspects of instruction. I have also learned that mentoring, preaching practice, and peer feedback are essential discipleship components.

Recommendations

This section discusses several recommendations for improving future seminars. These recommendations are based on personal reflections and participant feedback.

General Recommendations

As stated above, a pastoral responsibility for discipleship training is taught in Scripture. Because preaching is a primary means of presenting the Gospel message, every church should sponsor a preaching training program for members with the speaking gift. Training should be conducted by experienced preachers.

The methodology of this project included observation, instruction, application, and evaluation. Because Christ selected specific people to serve as His disciples, I will use “selection” as a methodological principle in future seminars. Because the speaking gift survey (Appendix D) is a useful tool to help members identify a potential preaching gift, in the future I will use this tool in the selection process.

Several trainees recommended that a smaller class size is more effective. This recommendation offers more interaction time between trainees and instructors, limits potential scheduling challenges, and reduces the length of practicum sessions. Trainees suggested that a maximum of five participants is sufficient.

Because it was the most convenient time for participants, most training sessions were on Sabbath afternoon. However, some trainees suggested that non-Sabbath meetings

would have reduced scheduling challenges. They also suggested a three-month training period during the winter or spring months.

Instructional Phase Recommendations

As stated above, classroom lectures were a necessary training component. I used written materials and visual aids. However, lectures were often too long (most exceeded an hour), presented too much theoretical information, and lacked sufficient practical exercises. For future seminars, I recommend that lectures should consist of a 40-minute presentation (including practical exercises), a 5-10-minute quiz, and a 5-10-minute question-and-answer period.

Material comprehension is an important part of instruction. Participants took a final exam at the end of training. No quizzes were given after each lecture because of time constraints. However, it would have been beneficial to offer quizzes after each presentation and a final exam at the end of the instructional phase, when the material was fresh in the minds of participants. To improve material comprehension, I recommend these testing practices for future seminars.

Some participants also found consecutive lectures challenging because of the amount of information presented. It was suggested that one lecture per week for eight consecutive weeks would have been more effective. Providing lecture outlines in advance was also beneficial. Participants also suggested that training should include counsel on various research tools (such as commentaries, etc.) for use in sermon preparation.

Some participant sermons revealed weak exegesis. More class exercises on proper exegesis would have helped trainees to practice proficiency in discovering the exegetical and homiletical ideas of a passage. Because sermon bullets were either unclear or absent

in participant sermons, trainees also suggested focused exercises on developing a sermon bullet in future seminars. Sermon appeals were also weak. Focused training on making appeals would have also been beneficial to trainees. In future seminars, I will provide more extensive training in these areas.

There are three additional principles that should have been included in training. First, participants needed instruction on assessing the spiritual needs of a congregation. Training in this area will help participants to develop sermons relevant to their listeners. Second, trainees also needed instruction on giving their conversion testimony. This is useful for delivering sermons and witnessing. Third, watching the sermons of effective preachers is an important training tool for future seminars.

Practicum Phase Recommendations

Trainees preached three 30-minute sermons during training. Preaching skill development was difficult to measure with three messages. More sermons would provide a greater opportunity to measure preaching skill growth (Lose, pp. 49-50). In future seminars, I recommend requiring five 10-15-minute sermons, with each sermon based on a different textual genre. One possible scenario involves one sermon each on apocalyptic, narrative, parable, personal testimony, and a genre of choice. One message could also be a capstone sermon, delivered during a church worship service.

Participants were also taught my “eight foundation stones” of topical sermon development. The first three “stones” included: (a) choose a topic; (b) consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage; and (c) exegete this passage to identify its main idea. Because several participant messages revealed weak or absent sermon bullets and shallow exegesis, this approach created difficulties for some

participants. Topical preaching is a legitimate preaching style. However, it is not the best approach for beginner preaching trainees. Also, for uninformed or untrained people, choosing a preaching topic prior to passage selection usually leads to either proof-texting or eisegesis. Because trainees were beginners in the preaching craft, I should have required that trainees focus on a single preaching passage. I should have also provided guidance on choosing simple passages.

Because several homiletics experts suggest the first step of choosing a passage (see Chapter 4), a simpler approach for the first three steps in sermon development could be: (a) select a main preaching passage; (b) faithfully exegete the passage to identify its exegetical idea; and (c) determine the homiletical idea and sermon bullet to express the main sermon idea. In future seminars, I will require participants to choose a preaching passage as a first step in developing sermons. I will also have a class discussion on why trainees chose their preaching passages.

To help with exegesis, I will also require future trainees to construct specific sermon points that answer four questions: What does the passage say about God? What does it say about the people involved? How does it apply to our lives? What commitment is God calling us to make? Samaan (2016) recommends answering these four questions in his relational Bible study model (pp. 146-161). These questions will help trainees to develop a sermon body and an appeal based on the preaching passage.

As stated above, mentoring is an essential component of preaching discipleship. However, because of ministry commitments, it was difficult for pastoral mentors to be regularly available for trainees. I met with some participants for counsel on sermon development. I also initially required monthly meetings with trainees, but time demands

prevented this from taking place on a consistent basis. In future training seminars, I plan to have required meetings with participants before their sermons to provide counsel on selecting a preaching passage, identifying the exegetical and homiletical ideas, and answering Samaan's four questions in his relational Bible study model. These meetings will offer direct guidance from the instructor on sermon development and ensure that participant messages are based on an accurate interpretation of Scripture. They will also ensure that trainees will make a relevant application of their preaching passage.

Sermon Evaluation Recommendations

Sermon evaluations are essential to effective preaching discipleship. Participants used the "Knoxville First Sermon Reflection Form" to evaluate trainee sermons. No training was offered on the use of this form. Participants also observed that this form was not user-friendly. Some suggested that the grading scale should be 0-5 instead of 0-3. Clearer statements related to content and delivery should have been included. In response to these recommendations, I developed a more comprehensive, user-friendly evaluation form, the "Knoxville First Revised Sermon Reflection Form" (Appendix C), for use in future seminars. One participant also recommended that trainees should watch video replays of their messages with the instructor for discussion and feedback. This is a useful tool in the mentoring process and requires an additional time commitment.

Final Thoughts

Adventism began as a proclamation-based movement and involved both lay members and clergy. Given that (a) Adventist pastors have a responsibility to conduct discipleship training, (b) preaching is a primary means for effecting conversion and

advancing the remnant message, and (c) Adventist churches have members endowed with the preaching gift, every Adventist church should implement a preaching discipleship program under the leadership of gifted pastors. This emphasis would enable the church to perpetuate its proclamation-based legacy. It would also empower the church to fulfill its God-given role to complete the Great Commission in preparation for Christ's return.

This project has also demonstrated that preaching discipleship can be successful. Trainees reflected significant creativity and depth in their messages, despite the fact that a majority of them had little to no preaching experience prior to training. Several trainees also expressed an interest in follow-up training, worship service preaching opportunities, and evangelistic preaching opportunities. Participants learned that preaching is a sacred responsibility requiring time and effort. They also learned to appreciate what pastors experience on a weekly basis in sermon preparation. Overall, I am hopeful that this project has motivated participants to continue to develop their speaking skills for a preaching ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I am also hopeful that it will inspire pastoral leaders to equip gifted members for a preaching ministry by conducting preaching discipleship seminars in their churches.

APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT MATERIAL

**Participant Recruitment Script for a
Preaching Discipleship Training Seminar**
Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church
By Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates
March-August, 2018

“Hello _____. I will be conducting a preaching discipleship seminar here at the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church in the near future. Through our church interactions in the time that I have served in this church as the senior pastor, I have sensed that you have an apparent giftedness for speaking in front of groups. I have also noticed that you might have an apparent interest in developing skills for a potential preaching ministry. Given these observations, I would like to invite you to be one of twelve participants in this training seminar. This seminar will provide instruction on the basic components of developing and delivering effective sermons. It will also provide an opportunity to preach sermons in front of your peers and receive feedback. There will also be opportunities to evaluate the sermons of fellow participants. If you are interested in becoming a participant, there is a specific consent form that outlines your exact duties that we can review and sign at the appropriate time. Overall, this seminar will be a rich and rewarding experience for all parties involved. Would you like to participate in this preaching discipleship training seminar?”

**Pastoral Mentoring Team Recruitment Script for a
Preaching Discipleship Training Seminar**

Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church

By Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates

March-August 2018

“Hello _____. I will be conducting a preaching discipleship seminar here at the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church in the near future. I will be selecting twelve Knoxville First church members who seem to have a gift for public speaking and have an apparent burden to be trained for a potential preaching ministry. These twelve members will have the blessing of going through a six-month training seminar. It is very important to me as the researcher/instructor that a local pastoral mentoring team be in place to provide both oral and written feedback on participant sermons in order to mentor and coach participants through training. I would also like to utilize your experience and expertise on the effectiveness of the seminar at the appropriate time. Given the fact that you are a conference pastoral leader who lives in the area, would you be interested in being part of a pastoral mentoring team that will provide coaching to preaching participants? If so, I have a consent form that outlines your specific responsibilities, which we will review and sign at the appropriate time. Thank you for your interest in helping to disciple, mentor, and coach participant members for a potential preaching ministry!

KNOXVILLE FIRST PREACHING DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING SEMINAR PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates is conducting a research study in partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Ministry degree through Andrews University. My participation in this research study is greatly appreciated by Pastor Bates.

Research Title: “The Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a Preaching Discipleship Program for Church Members in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this research study is to develop, implement, and evaluate a preaching discipleship training program for church members who have been identified as potentially having the spiritual gift of speaking in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church, a Georgia-Cumberland Conference church located in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Duration and Responsibilities of Participation: I understand that I will be required to complete the following duties as a **PARTICIPANT** of this preaching discipleship training seminar:

1. Attend FOUR (4) “phase one” instructional training sessions and EIGHT (8) “phase two” practicum training sessions, totaling 24 seminar hours, to be completed over a six-month period.
2. Attend monthly individual participant feedback sessions with the instructor.
3. Complete a speaking gift survey provided by the instructor in my personal time.
4. Preach THREE (3) 20-30-minute sermons to the training class.
5. Provide verbal and written evaluations of the sermons of fellow participants.
6. Provide verbal and written evaluations on the effectiveness of the seminar.

Video Recordings: I understand that all seminar lectures (including questions and comments from attendees, including myself) will be video-recorded for possible future use in discipleship training. I consent to this stipulation. I also understand that the three sermons that I preach to the training class during training will be video-recorded, and copies will be given to me personally and no one else.

Benefits: I understand that the benefits of this research study include (1) the potential development of specific preaching skills that include the construction and delivery of effective sermons, (2) the potential development of specific skills for critiquing and evaluating sermons, and (3) potential spiritual growth in personal preaching skills through the discipleship process of peer review and professional mentorship by the instructor, fellow participants, and a pastoral mentoring team.

Risks: Minimal risks for this research study include (1) the vulnerability of preaching sermons to a peer group, and (2) a willingness to subject oneself to peer review and evaluation.

Voluntary Participation: I have been informed that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. I am fully aware that there will be no penalty or loss of benefits if I decide to cancel my participation in this study. I am also fully aware that there will be no cost or financial remuneration to me personally for my participation in this study.

Confidentiality: I understand that my identity will not be disclosed in any published document, and that the researcher will keep all recorded research data (written and video) inside a file cabinet located within a locked storage room, inside a locked church office at the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church, as well as on a password-protected computer and a password-protected data storage drive.

Contact: I am fully aware that I can contact **Pastor Swearingen Bates** at (PHONE NUMBER) or (EMAIL ADDRESS), or his Doctor of Ministry cohort leader _____ at (PHONE NUMBER) or (EMAIL ADDRESS) for answers to any questions that I might have that are related to this research study. I am fully aware that I can also contact the **Institutional Review Board** (IRB) at Andrews University at (269) 471-6361 or irb@andrews.edu.

I acknowledge that I have read the contents of this Participant Informed Consent Form and have received verbal explanations to my personal questions regarding this research study. My questions concerning this study have been answered satisfactorily. I hereby give my voluntary consent to participate in this research study. I am fully aware that if I have any additional questions, I can contact the researcher and/or his cohort leader at the contact information provided above.

Participant – Printed Name

Participant – Signature

Contact Number

Date

Instructor – Printed Name

Instructor – Signature

Contact Number

Date

KNOXVILLE FIRST PREACHING DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING SEMINAR PASTORAL MENTOR INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates is conducting a research study in partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Ministry degree through Andrews University. My participation in this research study is greatly appreciated by Pastor Bates.

Research Title: “The Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a Preaching Discipleship Program for Church Members in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this research study is to develop, implement, and evaluate a preaching discipleship training program for church members who have been identified as potentially having the spiritual gift of speaking in the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Duration and Responsibilities of Participation: I understand that I will be required to complete the following duties as a **PASTORAL MENTOR** for this preaching discipleship training seminar:

1. Attend FOUR (4) phase one training sessions and EIGHT (8) phase two practicum sessions, totaling 24 seminar hours to be completed over a six-month period.
2. Complete a speaking gift survey provided by the instructor in my personal time.
3. Attend monthly pastoral mentoring team feedback sessions with the instructor.
4. Provide written and oral evaluations of trainee sermons given to the training class.
5. Provide verbal and written evaluations on the overall effectiveness of the seminar.

Video Recordings: I understand that all seminar lectures (including questions and comments from attendees, including myself) will be video-recorded for possible future use in discipleship training. I consent to this stipulation.

Benefits: I understand that the benefits of this study include (1) the potential development of specific preaching skills that include the construction and delivery of effective sermons, (2) the potential development of specific skills in critiquing and evaluating sermons, and (3) potential spiritual growth in personal preaching skills through the discipleship process of peer review and professional mentorship by the instructor, fellow participants, and a pastoral support team.

Risks: A minimal risk for this research study includes the contribution of constructive feedback to participants regarding their personal preaching skills.

Voluntary Participation: I have been informed that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. I am fully aware that there will be no penalty or loss of benefits if I decide to cancel my participation in this study. I am also fully aware that there will be no cost or financial remuneration to me personally for my participation in this study.

Confidentiality: I understand that my identity will not be disclosed in any published document, and that the researcher will keep all recorded research data (written and video) inside a file cabinet located within a locked storage room, inside a locked church office at the Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church, as well as on a password-protected computer and a password-protected data storage drive.

Contact: I am fully aware that I can contact **Pastor Swearingen Bates** at (PHONE NUMBER) or (EMAIL ADDRESS), or his Doctor of Ministry cohort leader _____ at (PHONE NUMBER) or (EMAIL ADDRESS) for answers to any questions that I might have that are related to this research study. I am fully aware that I can also contact the **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** at Andrews University at (269) 471-6361 or irb@andrews.edu.

I acknowledge that I have read the contents of this Consent Form and have received verbal explanations to my personal questions regarding this research study. My questions concerning this study have been answered satisfactorily. I hereby give my voluntary consent to participate in this research study. I am fully aware that if I have any additional questions, I can contact the researcher and/or his cohort leader at the contact information provided above.

Pastoral Mentor – Printed Name

Pastoral Mentor – Signature

Contact Number

Date

Instructor – Printed Name

Instructor – Signature

Contact Number

Date

APPENDIX B

REVISED LECTURE OUTLINES

**The Foolishness of Preaching:
How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons**
Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates

Lecture One: Theological Foundations for Preaching Discipleship

Great Commission

- **Matthew 28:19** – Go and make disciples of all nations.
- **Mark 16:15** – Preach the Gospel message to every creature.
- **Luke 24:46-49** – We are Christ’s witnesses of the Gospel message.
- **John 20:21** – As the Father sent Christ, so does Christ send us.
- **Acts 1:8** – We are Christ’s witnesses in the world.

Remnant Mission and Message

- **Matthew 24:14** – The Gospel message will go to every nation.
- **Revelation 12:17** – An end-time remnant will bear a global testimony for Christ.
- **Revelation 14:6-12** – The remnant message is the Three Angels’ Messages.

Testimonies for the Church, 9:19: “In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world . . . They have been given a work of the most solemn import – the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel’s messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.”

Priesthood of All Believers

- **Exodus 19:5-6** – Israel served as a kingdom of priests (ministers) for God.
- **1 Peter 2:5, 9-10** – The church is a royal priesthood (ministry) for God.
- **Revelation 1:5-6; 5:8-10** – The faithful are God’s kings and priests (ministers).
- This teaching promotes that every member is a minister for Christ.
- Every believer is called to participate in ministry, based on giftedness.
- There is no difference between clergy and laity – both are called to ministry!
- Some churches are clergy-dependent – this attitude needs to change.

General Conference Daily Bulletin (April 12, 1901), page 204: “The ministers are hovering over the churches . . . while thousands are perishing out of Christ. If the proper instruction were given, if the proper methods were followed, every church member would do his work as a member of the body.”

Review & Herald, Sept. 6, 1881, paragraph 3: “The real character of the church is measured, not by the high profession she makes, not by the names enrolled upon the church book, but by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her persevering, faithful workers.”

Gospel Workers, page 352: “The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and woman comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.”

Promise of the Holy Spirit

- **Luke 11:9-13** – God is willing to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- **John 14:15-18** – Jesus promised the Spirit to those who love and obey Him.
- **Acts 2:16-18** – The Day of Pentecost foreshadowed the latter rain of the Spirit.
- **Acts 3:19-21** – The time of refreshing (early and latter rains) is promised.
- **Acts 4:31-33** – The apostles were filled with the Spirit to witness for Christ.
- **Revelation 18:1-4** – An angel lights the whole world with his glory (latter rain).
- Christ taught more about the Holy Spirit than any other subject.
- Conditions to receiving the Holy Spirit – **Matthew 3:7-12; Mark 11:24-26; John 14:15-16; Acts 2:1-4; 2:36-38; 5:32; Hebrews 10:35-37; James 5:7**

Review & Herald, June 10, 1902, paragraph 3: “Christ had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose in His teaching, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of His Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment! Yet what subject is less dwelt upon today? What promise is less fulfilled? Prophecies are dwelt upon, doctrines are expounded, but the promise of the Spirit . . . is incidentally touched upon, and that is all.”

Desire of Ages, page 672: “Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us . . . But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given.”

Manuscript Releases, 21:155: “When the third angel’s message shall go forth with a loud voice and the whole earth shall be lightened with His glory, the Holy Spirit is poured out upon God’s people. The revenue of glory has been accumulating for this closing work of the third angel’s message. Of the prayers that have been ascending for the fulfillment of the promise – the descent of the Holy Spirit – not one has been lost. Each prayer has been accumulating, ready to overflow and pour forth a healing flood of heavenly influence and accumulated light all over the world.”

Role of Spiritual Gifts

- A *spiritual gift* is a divinely imparted ability that, when exercised, results in the conversion and edification of the faithful, and expands God’s kingdom on earth.
- A *talent* is a natural or developed ability that may be used in a Christian capacity.

- Spiritual gifts can be imparted at birth, like in the cases of Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 1:5**) and Paul (**Galatians 1:15-16**)
- They can also lie dormant until conversion, and can be imparted at the time of water baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 10:44-48; 19:1-7**).
- New Testament spiritual gifts passages include **Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 4:9-11**. See also **Matthew 7:22; 19:10-12; Mark 16:17; 1 Corinthians 7:7-8**.
- **Steps in discovering spiritual gifts:** (1) study into the various gifts; (2) pray for God's guidance in the process of discovery; (3) identify skills and talents that show tendencies toward specific gifts; (4) identify spiritual interests and ministry burdens that might require specific gifts; (5) seek guidance and counsel from discerning church members; (6) seek confirmation from the church body on the presence of gifts; (7) dedicate your gifts and talents to God's work and not for personal gain; and (8) look for clear indications of success, i.e. the conversion and edification of believers, in your ministry efforts.

Christ's Object Lessons, page 328: "Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them the channel for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe."

Gift of Speaking (Preaching)

- **1 Peter 4:11** – "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God."
- Speaking is a spiritual gift that operates through public preaching.
- Some people might possess public speaking skills in a secular capacity.
- The talent of public speaking is contrasted with the spiritual gift of speaking (preaching) because the latter involves the proclamation of the Gospel message and results in the conversion and spiritual nurture of believers.
- The preaching gift is also used in conjunction with other gifts, i.e. apostleship, teaching, evangelism, exhortation, and prophecy (fore-telling and forth-telling).
- There are several words for "speaking" and "preaching" in the NT; these include "speaking" (**1 Peter 4:11**); "speech/utterance" (**1 Corinthians 1:5**); "speaking boldly" (**Acts 14:3**); "preach" (**1 Corinthians 1:5; 2:4; Revelation 14:6**).
- **1 Corinthians 1:17-24** – Paul discussed the "foolishness of preaching."
- **Romans 10:13-15** – The Spirit uses preaching to lead people to salvation.
- **Luke 4:12-19** – God anointed Christ to preach the Gospel message!
- **2 Timothy 4:1-5** – Paul told Timothy to be ready to preach in all situations!
- Given the importance of preaching, it is vital to train gifted people to preach!

Testimonies for the Church, 5:87, 300: "The preaching of the Gospel is God's chosen agency for the salvation of souls . . . There may be conversions without the instrumentality of a sermon . . . but God's appointed means of saving souls is through 'the foolishness of preaching.'"

L. Phillips, “Preaching Powerfully,” Part 1 of 6, *Elder’s Digest* (April-June 2016), page 11: “God invented preaching and endowed certain men and women with this gift in order to promote the gospel of salvation. Through the unction of the Holy Spirit, dedicated early Christians brought millions to the foot of the cross. Since then, through preaching, millions more have been brought to salvation, and the practice continues today.”

A Biblical Model for Discipleship Training

- Since the church is called to make disciples, and preaching discipleship is an important area of training, we must discover a biblical model of discipleship.
- Christ used four principles when He trained His disciples for ministry.
- **Observation** – The disciples *observed* how Christ performed ministry.
- **Instruction** – Christ *instructed* His disciples on various Christian principles.
- **Application** – Christ gave His disciples opportunities to *apply* lessons learned through practice by providing them with ministry responsibilities.
- **Evaluation** – Christ *evaluated* their ministry efforts, giving them feedback so they could improve their ministry skills.
- These four principles will be used in this preaching training seminar!
- **NOTE:** Christian churches are called to be discipleship training centers!
- **NOTE:** Pastoral leaders are responsible for discipling members for ministry!
- This seminar will help to disciple trainees in the development of preaching skills!

***Ministry of Healing*, page 149** – “Every church should be a training school for Christian workers.”

***Review & Herald*, July 9, 1895, paragraph 2** – “Ministers should take the officers and members of the church into their confidence, and teach them how to labor for the Master.”

**The Foolishness of Preaching:
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Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates

Lecture Two: Sermon Discovery: Revving the Homiletical Engine

Introductory Thoughts

- A *sermon* is defined as a Scripture-based presentation designed to teach biblical principles for proper doctrinal instruction and practical Christian living.
- *Preaching* is defined as the oral, public proclamation of a biblical sermon through the personality of the preacher to motivate listeners to hear and respond to God's message, and grow in their commitment to Him.
- As preachers faithfully deliver sermons, the Holy Spirit and holy angels are responsible for *convincing* and *converting* listeners!

Evangelism, page 38: "The Lord never forsakes His faithful messengers. He sends to their aid heavenly agencies and accompanies their labors with the power of the Holy Spirit to *convince* and *convert*." (Bold italics mine)

Preaching Forms and Styles

- **Topical preaching** – sermons on biblical topics, doctrines, subjects, and themes.
- **Evangelistic preaching** – sermons on doctrinal and apocalyptic subjects.
- **Narrative/Biographical preaching** – sermons on narrative stories in Scripture.
- **Prophetic preaching** – sermons on social justice, equality, and civil rights.
- **Deductive preaching** – sermons that give a conclusion first and then prove this conclusion through the course of the message.
- **Inductive preaching** – sermons that unfold a conclusion progressively through the course of a message.
- **NOTE** – All sermons, regardless of form or style, should be *expository*, meaning that they should be biblically-based through faithful textual exegesis.
- Overall, an *effective sermon* will (1) be Bible-based, (2) emphasize Christ and salvation, (3) be relevant and applicable to real life, and (4) encourage a listener response through an appeal. **Example** – **Acts 2:14-39** (Peter's Pentecost sermon).

What Shall I Preach About?

- Inspiration for sermon ideas and topics come from a variety of sources.
- These include: (1) **a liturgical factor** (church calendar events); (2) **an external factor** (community events and issues); (3) **a pastoral factor** (congregational needs); and (4) **a personal factor** (God speaks through a passage).
- A preacher must ultimately be led by the Holy Spirit in choosing an idea or topic.

The Homiletical Engine

- D.E. Thomas discusses the *homiletical engine*, a process of discovering and developing sermon ideas and topics (*Ministry*, May 2010, pp. 6-9).
- Stated in my own words, this “engine” consists of (1) a quality devotional life, which produces a flow of sermon ideas; (2) a method of logging or recording these ideas, so they may eventually become sermons; (3) the use of a file that stores illustrations that support sermon ideas; (4) interaction with the local church congregation, which identifies specific spiritual needs; (5) interaction with the community for awareness of customs, experiences, and events; and (6) quality time invested in reading, meditating, writing, and rewriting sermons.
- **NOTE** – The homiletical engine needs to be constantly revving if the preacher is to deliver effective sermons that are relevant and transformational to listeners!

D.E. Thomas, “The Internal Dynamic of Credible Preaching,” *Ministry* (May 2010), page 7: “The homiletical engine . . . begins with the birth of an idea, then moves through the preservation of the idea, to the incubation, to its distillation, then writing and refinement to the point where it actually gets practiced and preached.”

D.E. Thomas, “The Internal Dynamic of Credible Preaching,” *Ministry* (May 2010), page 7: “Good preachers discipline themselves to develop this engine and install it, front and center, in their lives. This engine is never off. And if the engine is well-built and in good operating condition, the number of ideas and sermons produced is endless, the quality high. Those who preach regularly well know how much the process affects life, and that by this all-encompassing discipline and process, preachers deliver something worth listening to week by week.”

D.E. Thomas, “The Internal Dynamic of Credible Preaching,” *Ministry* (May 2010), page 9: “Preachers must be careful to tend to the internal dynamic that fuels preaching. They must constantly tune up and revamp their homiletical engines. There are so many things that can incapacitate it. Borrowing whole sermons from others damages it; insincerity damages it; failure to meditate and reflect, unbelief, and busyness can be deadly. Whatever the cost, preaching is too valuable a thing to be toyed with. Those who tend to the inner dynamic of preaching are worth listening to, even if their abilities are marginal. Those who allow themselves to be expedient with it become as ‘sounding brass and clanging symbol.’ They are unworthy of the pulpit and ought to leave the preaching to others.”

Personal Consecration and Preaching Effectiveness

- Personal consecration impacts the overall effectiveness of preaching.
- Christ exemplified the message that He preached to others (**John 17:19**).
- Paul also exemplified in his life what he preached (**1 Corinthians 9:26-27; 2 Timothy 3:10-12**).
- Sermons must first impact the heart and life of the preacher before they can impact the hearts and lives of listeners!

Testimonies for the Church, 4:526-527: “No man is qualified to stand in the sacred desk unless he has felt the transforming influence of the truth of God upon his own soul.”

Testimonies for the Church, 5:454 – “While they [ministers] are consecrating themselves to God, a convincing power will attend their efforts to present the truth to others, and its light will find access to many hearts.”

Acts of the Apostles, pages 510-511: “Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity.”

Selected Messages, 2:378: “Let those who teach the truth present it as it is in Jesus. Under the subduing, sanctifying, refining influence of the truth of God they are as clean vessels. Let them be leavened with Bible religion, and what an influence would go forth from them to the world! . . . Let them be living representatives of the truth they advocate, and honor God’s law by strict and holy compliance with its requirements, walking before the Lord in purity, in holiness, and a power will attend the proclamation of the truth that will reflect light everywhere.”

The Preacher’s Devotional Life

- For preaching to be effective, a preacher must be consecrated to God.
- Personal consecration begins with the preacher’s devotional life.
- In my opinion, a healthy devotional life is most important part of the *homiletical engine* – it deepens the preacher’s walk with God, produces a steady flow of fresh sermon ideas, and impacts preaching effectiveness!
- Preaching discipleship includes how to cultivate an effective devotional life.
- Christ practiced proper devotional habits (**Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12**).

Ministry of Healing, page 52 – “The early morning hours often found Him [Christ] in some secluded place, meditating, searching the Scriptures, or in prayer.”

- A healthy devotional life involves rising **early in the morning** and **finding a secluded place** to engage in **Bible study, personal prayer, and reflection**. These spiritual disciplines should be practiced on a daily basis!

Steps to Christ, page 70: “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work.”

- Prayer is an essential devotional exercise (**Psalms 55:17; Daniel 6:10; Acts 4:31**).
- Key EGW references on the importance of prayer – *Steps to Christ, pages 94-95, 98; Testimonies for the Church 1:163; Great Controversy, page 210*.

***Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 203:** “The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power.”

- **Bible study** is also an essential devotional exercise (**John 5:39; 2 Timothy 2:15**).
- Scripture must be studied with an open, receptive heart to hear what it says, and not be approached with preconceived ideas (**Ezra 7:10; Acts 17:10-11; James 1:21**); also, a focus on one passage to determine its intended meaning is more beneficial than reading several chapters with no focus or purpose in mind!

***Steps to Christ*, page 90:** “There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures . . . If God’s word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose rarely seen in these times . . . One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained.”

- An appropriate type of **meditation** is also an important part of the devotional life.
- This includes genuine spiritual reflection during and after prayer and Bible study.
- This process of **spiritual reflection** ponders what has been studied, and helps an individual to hear God’s voice (**Psalms 77:6; 119:145-148; 139:23-24**).

***Education*, pages 260-261:** “Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ’s loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel.”

Concluding Thoughts

- The preacher’s ***homiletical engine*** produces a steady flow of sermon ideas.
- The most important part of this “engine” is the **preacher’s devotional life**.
- Effective preaching begins with the devotional experience of preacher.
- Daily devotional exercises include finding a secluded place early in the morning for prayer, Bible study, and reflection.
- A **healthy devotional life** deepens personal consecration, produces sermon ideas, and makes preaching transformational; make time daily for devotional exercises!
- Keep that ***homiletical engine*** revving at full throttle!

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Lecture Three: Sermon Development: From Their Town to Our Town

Developing a Sermon – Eight “Foundation Stones”

1. Discover and select a sermon topic or idea.
2. Consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage.
3. Faithfully exegete this passage to identify the *exegetical idea*, i.e. the author’s original meaning to the ancient congregation.
4. Form the *homiletical idea* based on the universal spiritual principle of the exegetical idea, and construct a *sermon bullet*, i.e. a key phrase or statement summarizing the homiletical idea in a way that is easily remembered.
5. Select and arrange main sermon points that discuss the homiletical idea.
6. Select illustrations that demonstrate the homiletical idea.
7. Construct an attention-grabbing introduction and an appeal-provoking conclusion.
8. Select a catchy, creative, interest-peak title based on the homiletical idea.

The Sermon Bullet

- A sermon should be a “**rifle shot**” and not a “**buckshot**,” meaning it should have a single, dominant idea, not several ideas that are often unrelated.
- Don’t worry about lacking enough sermon material; most sermons “bite off more than they can chew” (they often present too much information!).
- Express the single idea in the form of a *sermon bullet* – a key phrase expressing the idea in a way that can be easily remembered by listeners.
- This bullet should be repeated and emphasized regularly during the sermon.
- The bullet is like a song chorus – people might forget verses, but not the chorus!

Evangelism, page 657: “One subject, a few points made plain and clear, would be of more value to the hearer than this mass of matter which you may call evidence.”

The Interpretive Journey – “From Their Town to Our Town”

- The process of textual exegesis can be referred to as the interpretive journey.
- Exegesis draws the meaning out of the passage; it doesn’t read a pre-conceived meaning into the passage (which is referred to as eisegesis).
- This journey first involves grasping the meaning of a passage in “**their town**,” i.e. in the world of the Bible writer and the ancient congregation (*exegetical idea*).
- This journey next involves applying the meaning of the passage in “**our town**,” i.e. in the modern world of the contemporary congregation (*homiletical idea*).
- Therefore, the **interpretive journey** can be summarized as a **two-step process**.
- **Step #1 – grasp the text in their town**: determine the original thought that the Bible writer conveyed to the ancient congregation (*exegetical idea*).

- **Step #2 – bring the text to our town:** determine the universal theological principle from the **exegetical idea** that applies to contemporary listeners (**homiletical idea**); this is the basis for the **sermon bullet**.
- Remember, preaching is based on proper Bible study!
- Faithful exegesis ensures that the sermon idea comes from the passage!

From Their Town to Our Town – Philippians 2:1-8

- **Exegetical Idea** – “Christ had a mindset of self-denial, putting the needs of others before Himself; this involved Him humbling Himself by laying aside His divinity, taking human nature, and dying a cruel death on the cross to save humanity.”
- **Homiletical Idea** – “To be like Christ, we must have a mindset of self-denial; this involves us humbling ourselves, putting the needs of others before ourselves.”
- **Possible Sermon Bullet** – “Do you want the mind of Christ? Humble yourself!”

From Their Town to Our Town – Matthew 8:23-27

- **Exegetical Idea** – “As our God and Creator of nature, Christ stood with His disciples in the boat during a storm and delivered them by calming the storm that threatened their destruction.”
- **Homiletical Idea** – “As our God and Creator, Christ stands with us during our personal storms in life.”
- **Possible Sermon Bullet** – “Are you in a personal storm? Christ is sovereign – He will stand with you and calm your storm!”

Sermon Content

- Choose key points from the passage that support the main sermon idea.
- Be ruthlessly selective on material; remember, “less is more!”
- Avoid too many points and also try not to overprove points.
- Sermon movements from point to point should be properly bridged and connected with smooth transitional thoughts connecting points together.
- Sermon content should emphasize self-surrender (*Desire of Ages*, page 523) and be based on the sacred fire of God’s Word and not on the strange fire of worldly philosophy (*Prophets and Kings*, page 626).

Testimonies for the Church, 6:56: “Keep the mind concentrated on a few vital points. Do not bring unimportant ideas into your discourses . . . that have no connection with your text.”

Christ’s Object Lessons, page 23: “Christ did not deal in abstract theories, but in that which is essential for the development of character, that which will enlarge man’s capacity for knowing God, and increase his efficiency for doing good. He spoke to men of those truths that relate to the conduct of life, and that take hold upon eternity.”

Illustrations

- Illustrations are effective in riveting a sermon idea into a listener's mind.
- The most effective illustrations come from one's own personal experience.
- When using illustrations that involve other people, get permission to use them!
- Be as general and anonymous as possible; don't embellish – try to be accurate!
- Illustrations should be based on familiar associations and everyday vocations.

Testimonies for the Church, 4:260: “The lessons of Christ were illustrated so clearly that the lowest and most simple-minded could readily comprehend them.”

M.E. Colon, *Keys to Sermon Preparation* (2010), page 18: “A sermon lesson is like a nail. An illustration is like a hammer that drives the nail home.”

Youth's Instructor, March 19, 1903, paragraph 7 – “In His teaching Christ reached the minds of men by the pathway of their familiar associations . . . His illustrations were drawn from the great book of nature and from the treasury of household ties and affections . . . With the common duties of life he bound up the most precious treasures of divine truth. The regenerating power of His grace was represented by figures that all could comprehend . . . Everything connected with the common routine of life was invested with solemn dignity, and shown to be related to eternal interests.”

Christ's Object Lessons, page 21: “By connecting His teaching with the scenes of life, experience, or nature, He [Christ] secured their attention and impressed their hearts. Afterward, as they looked upon the objects that illustrated His lessons, they recalled the words of the divine Teacher . . . Jesus sought an avenue to every heart. By using a variety of illustrations, He not only presented truth in its different phases, but appealed to the different hearers. Their interest was aroused by figures drawn from the surroundings of their daily life.”

Introductions and Conclusions

- An effective sermon will have a grabbing introduction to secure listener attention.
- Good introductions use illustrations and stories that introduce the main idea.
- An effective sermon will also have a thought-provoking conclusion and appeal.
- The appeal is crucial – it is when listeners act on the sermon idea; listeners should be called to receive Christ and apply the sermon idea to their lives.
- No new material should be introduced during the sermon conclusion or appeal.
- Never end with an open-ended question that wasn't answered during the sermon!
- **Quote** from a famous Adventist preacher: “I would rather preach a ‘C’ sermon and make an ‘A’ appeal, than preach an ‘A’ sermon and make a ‘C’ appeal.”

H. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* (2014), page 12: “You must grab your listener's attention any way you can . . . and give them no choice but to listen from there.”

J.A. Cress, “Making Your Sermon Live,” *Ministry* (March 1995), page 27: “If you don’t focus on people in the first moment or two, you have lost your audience.”

Testimonies for the Church, 4:394: “No discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel, making a practical application of the truths set forth.”

Sermon Titles

- Sermon titles should be catchy and creative in order to awaken curiosity.
- Titles should reflect the sermon’s main idea, and can be the sermon “bullet” itself.
- Titles can use a play on words, popular catch phrases, or sayings!

Sermon Structure – Five Main Parts

- **Part #1** – Give an opening illustration that introduces the main sermon idea.
- **Part #2** – Provide an exposition of the main preaching passage.
- **Part #3** – Provide a discussion of sermon points that repeat the main idea.
- **Part #4** – Give a closing illustration that accentuates the main sermon idea.
- **Part #5** – Make an appeal to surrender to Christ and apply the main idea.

Final Steps in Sermon Development

- After a sermon idea is discovered and developed by the preacher, the sermon and its various parts should be outlined and written out.
- The main movements and points of the sermon should be committed to memory, regardless of whether notes, an outline, manuscript, or visual aids are used.
- Once this is done, the preacher should practice delivering the sermon out loud.

Juan Arrais, “Tips for Sermon Preparation,” *Elder’s Digest* (January-March, 2016), page 5: “After writing the sermon, preach it out loud for an imaginary congregation . . . This practice will help you articulate the words, memorize the concepts, strengthen your performance, eliminate parts that are not as important, and help you not to be captive to an outline when presenting the message.”

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Lecture Four: Sermon Delivery: The Two Codes and the Kairos Moment

General Thoughts

- Once a sermon has been discovered and developed, it must be delivered!
- Sermon delivery has to be effective in order for a message to be successful.
- How we say what we say is just as important as what we say in a sermon.
- Be direct in the delivery – give the trumpet a clear sound (**1 Corinthians 14:8**).
- Balance time efficiency without cutting a sermon short in terms of time.
- Shorter sermons are better for listeners in terms of content retention.
- 30-40 minutes is a reasonable time length for a sermon.

Key Quote: “If you don’t hit oil after 30 minutes, stop drilling!”

Key Point: “Take enough time, but don’t take too much time!”

Evangelism, page 439: “Avoid lengthy sermons. The people cannot retain one half of the discourses which they hear.”

Testimonies for the Church, 6:55-56: “Let the message for this time be presented, not in long, labored discourses, but in short talks, right to the point.”

The Audio Code, Part 1 (Verbal Posture)

- Avoid condescension, argumentation, and confrontation in sermon delivery.
- Don’t unnecessarily criticize people, churches, or church leaders in sermons.
- The pulpit is no place for political arguments or criticizing political leaders.
- When preaching challenging topics, have a “tear” in your “voice” (**Desire of Ages, page 353; Steps to Christ, page 12**).
- If a “word of judgment” is needed, balance it with a “word of grace.”
- Love your listeners – express tact, care, and concern for their salvation!
- Remember, you represent Christ, His Church, and His truth when you preach!

Evangelism, page 299: “Our words, our deportment, how we present the truth, may balance minds for or against the truth.”

Testimonies for the Church, 3:216: “Those who love to debate are unfitted for being pastors to the flock. They have trained their minds to meet opponents and to say sarcastic things, and they cannot come down to meet hearts that are sorrowing and need comforting. They have also dwelt so much upon the argumentative that they have neglected the practical subjects that the flock of God need.”

The Audio Code, Part 2 (Voice and Vocabulary)

- How we use our voice and words are very important in sermon delivery.
- Speak in a comfortable, pleasing tone, volume, and pace in sermons.
- Be calm, level-headed, and easy to follow when delivering sermons.
- Use elevated, appropriate speech and simple vocabulary when preaching.
- Present yourself as being one with your listeners; use “we” and “us” (not “you”)!
- Avoid calculated humor; natural humor can be appropriate at times.
- Handle Scripture with respect, professionalism, and proper pronunciation.

Testimonies for the Church, 4:260: “Jesus did not employ long and difficult words in His discourses, but used plain language, adapted to the minds of the common people.”

J.A. Cress, “Making Your Sermon Live,” *Ministry* (March 1995), page 27: “Use simple, newspaper-style language. Everyday words communicate your faith in a language everyone can understand and in a manner that holds the attention of your listeners. While there are about 40,000 words in English, only about 8,000 of those words comprise the basic language of everyday life. Do not assume that people will understand words beyond this basic vocabulary.”

Testimonies for the Church, 4:32: “The minister of Christ should be a man of prayer, a man of piety; cheerful, but never coarse and rough, jesting or frivolous. A spirit of frivolity may be in keeping with the profession of clowns and theatrical actors, but it is altogether beneath the dignity of a man who is chosen to stand between the living and the dead, and to be a mouthpiece for God.”

Evangelism, page 640: “There are too many long doctrinal sermons preached, without one spark of spiritual fervor and the love of God. There is too much gesticulation and relation of humorous anecdotes in the pulpit, and too little said of the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.”

Testimonies to Ministers, page 318: “Some ministers have adopted a style of preaching that has not the best influence. It has become a habit with them to weave anecdotes into their discourses . . . Ministers should not bring amusing stories into their preaching . . . The minister who mixes story-telling with his discourses is using strange fire. God is offended, and the cause of truth is dishonored, when His representatives descend to the use of cheap, trifling words.”

The Visual Code

- Non-verbal communication is just as important as verbal communication.
- Dress, gestures, expressions, and physical movements must be appropriate.
- Expressions and physical movements should be natural and proper.
- Avoid theatrical display in sermon presentations, and yet project joy in Christ!
- Avoid pointing at the congregation; open hands are preferable; make eye contact!

- Visual aids should also be appropriate when you use them; practice wisdom and discernment in the choice and use of visual aids.

Testimonies for the Church, 9:142: “By the use of charts, symbols, and representations of various kinds the minister can make the truth stand out clearly and distinctly. This is a help, and in harmony with the Word of God.”

Sermon Delivery – Appeals

- Every sermon should conclude with an appeal to apply the sermon.
- Decision cards, raising hands, standing, and altar calls are appeal options.
- Make the appeal without worrying about the results; be direct and specific.
- Show an earnest, genuine concern for the salvation of your listeners.
- Appeals should be culturally sensitive and vary according to venue.

Evangelism, pages 279-280 – “There are souls in every congregation who are hesitating, almost persuaded to be wholly for God. The decision is being made for time and eternity; but it is too often the case that . . . no direct appeals are made to those souls that are trembling in the balance . . . They decide to wait for a more favorable opportunity; but it never comes.”

Testimonies for the Church, 4:316 – “With an unction of the Holy Spirit upon him, giving him a burden for souls, he [the preacher] will not dismiss a congregation without presenting before them Jesus Christ, the sinner’s only refuge, making earnest appeals that will reach their hearts. He should feel that he may never meet these hearers again until the great day of God.”

Evangelism, page 283 – “The minister is not merely to present the Word of God in such a manner as to convince of sin in a general way, but he is to lift up Christ before his hearers. Christ’s claims upon them are to be made plain. The people should be urged to decide just now to be on the Lord’s side.”

Evangelism, page 285 – “As you present testing truth, ask often, who is now willing, as they have heard the words of God, pointing out their duty, to consecrate their hearts and minds, with all their affections, to Christ.”

Sermon Delivery – Elements of Persuasive Speech

- Four principles of persuasive speech should be used in sermon delivery.
- These principles are based upon the ancient Greek rhetorical tradition.
- Principle #1 – ***logos*** (a sermon should appeal to the logic of the mind).
- Principle #2 – ***pathos*** (a sermon should appeal to the emotion of the heart).
- Principle #3 – ***ethos*** (the speaker should project energy, likability, and passion).
- Principle #4 – ***kairos*** (an appeal should be made at the “opportune moment” during the sermon when listeners are at a peak of receptivity).

***Evangelism*, page 283** – “Many are convicted of sin, and feel their need of a sin-pardoning Savior; but . . . if words are not spoken at the right moment, calling for a decision . . . the convicted ones pass on without identifying themselves with Christ, the golden opportunity passes . . . and they go farther and farther away from the truth . . . and never take their stand on the Lord’s side.”

Sermon Delivery – Final Thoughts

- Sermon delivery is crucial to an effective sermon.
- This is when the preacher brings listeners into contact with Scripture; through the work of the Holy Spirit, this contact brings a transformation of life.
- Sermon delivery involves careful attention to the verbal and non-verbal principles of effective communication; this includes the four principles of persuasive speech.
- These principles empower preachers to deliver effective sermons, which can make a powerful impact on listeners!
- Preachers are called to be God’s mouthpieces to persuade people for Christ!
- **Acts 13:42-44; 18:4** – Paul and Barnabas persuaded and convinced their listeners to embrace Christ!

***Testimonies for the Church*, 6:56** – “Be careful never to lose a sense of the presence of the divine Watcher. Remember that you are speaking, not only before an assembly of men, but before One whom you should ever recognize. Speak as if the whole heavenly universe were before you.”

**The Foolishness of Preaching:
How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons**
Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates

Lecture Five: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Part 1

Developing a Sermon – Eight “Foundation Stones”

- Discover and select a sermon topic or idea.
- Consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage.
- Faithfully exegete this passage to identify the *exegetical idea*, i.e. the author’s original meaning to the ancient congregation.
- Form the *homiletical idea* based on the universal spiritual principle of the exegetical idea, and construct a *sermon bullet*, i.e. a key phrase or statement summarizing the homiletical idea in a way that is easily remembered.
- Select and arrange main sermon points that discuss the homiletical idea.
- Select illustrations that demonstrate the homiletical idea.
- Construct an attention-grabbing introduction and an appeal-provoking conclusion.
- Select a catchy, creative, interest-peak title based on the homiletical idea.

Developing a Sample Sermon

- **Step #1:** Select a single sermon topic – **Forgiveness**
- **Step #2:** Choose a main preaching passage on the topic – **Matthew 18:21-35**
- **Step #3:** Discover the exegetical idea of the passage

Exegetical Idea: “The king only forgave the debt of the wicked servant as that servant was willing to forgive the debts of others.”

- **Step #4:** Form the homiletical idea and sermon bullet of the passage

Homiletical Idea: “God only forgives our sin debt as we are willing to forgive the sin debts of others.”

Possible Sermon Bullet: “Forgive and be forgiven – seventy times seven!”

- **Step #5:** Select and arrange main sermon points that discuss the homiletical idea

Possible Sermon Point 1 – We should seek God’s forgiveness for our sins

Possible Sermon Point 2 – We should trust that God forgives us for our sins

Possible Sermon Point 3 – We should learn to forgive ourselves for our sins

Possible Sermon Point 4 – We should have a forgiving attitude toward others

Possible Sermon Point 5 – We should seek forgiveness and make restitution

Possible Sermon Point 6 – God is bountiful in His forgiveness toward us; we should be bountiful in our forgiveness toward others!

- **Step #6:** Select illustrations that demonstrate the homiletical idea

Illustration 1 – Forgiving difficult neighbors

Illustration 2 – Forgiving a difficult customer

Illustration 3 – Forgiving oneself for past sins and mistakes

Illustration 4 – Person who stole money/asked for forgiveness/made restitution

Illustration 5 – Person who forgave someone for arrogant comments

- **Step #7:** Construct an attention-grabbing introduction and an appeal-provoking conclusion

Introduction: Christians face a number of great challenges today. One challenge is forgiveness. Some struggle with forgiveness toward others (**use illustrations 1-2**). Others struggle with accepting God’s forgiveness and forgiving themselves (**use illustrations 3-4**). In this message, we will examine the various dimensions of the important spiritual grace of forgiveness.

Conclusion: There are times when we might struggle with forgiveness. It might be hard to trust in God’s forgiveness or forgive ourselves for past mistakes. There might be times when forgiving others is difficult. Yet, if we think about how much God has forgiven us for, we should pray for a forgiving heart toward others (**use illustration 5**). We should also seek forgiveness as well, and offer restitution when needed (**use illustration 4**).

Appeal: As we think about forgiveness today, we should remember, “**Forgive and Be Forgiven – Seventy Times Seven!**” God is bountiful in His forgiveness toward us, and we should be the same way toward others also! Is there a dimension of forgiveness that God is calling you to consider today? Do you need to seek God’s forgiveness? Do you need to forgive yourself for past mistakes, or forgive someone else for something? Do you need to seek forgiveness and possibly make restitution? How will you respond today?

- **Step #8:** Select a catchy, creative, interest-peaking title based on the homiletical idea

Possible Title – “How to Get Past the Past”

Possible Title – “Getting Past the Past”

Possible Title – “Seventy Times Seven”

Possible Title – “Forgive and Be Forgiven!”

**The Foolishness of Preaching:
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Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates

Lecture Six: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Part 2

Developing a Sermon – Eight “Foundation Stones”

- Discover and select a sermon topic or idea.
- Consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage.
- Faithfully exegete this passage to identify the *exegetical idea*, i.e. the author’s original meaning to the ancient congregation.
- Form the *homiletical idea* based on the universal spiritual principle of the exegetical idea, and construct a *sermon bullet*, i.e. a key phrase or statement summarizing the homiletical idea in a way that is easily remembered.
- Select and arrange main sermon points that discuss the homiletical idea.
- Select illustrations that demonstrate the homiletical idea.
- Construct an attention-grabbing introduction and an appeal-provoking conclusion.
- Select a catchy, creative, interest-peak title based on the homiletical idea.

Developing a Sample Sermon

- **Step #1:** Select a single sermon topic – **The Crisis of Jehoshaphat and Judah**
- **Step #2:** Choose a main preaching passage on the topic – **2 Chronicles 20:1-30**
- **Step #3:** Discover the exegetical idea of the passage

Exegetical Idea: “When Jehoshaphat and Judah faced a crisis, they learned that the battle was not theirs to fight – it was God’s battle to fight!”

- **Step #4:** Form the homiletical idea and sermon bullet of the passage

Homiletical Idea: “When we face a crisis, we need to learn that the battle is not ours to fight – it is God’s battle to fight!”

Possible Sermon Bullet: “The battle is not ours – it’s God’s!”

- **Step #5:** Select and arrange main sermon points that discuss the homiletical idea

Possible Sermon Point 1 – The “good guys” are God, Jehoshaphat, and Judah

Possible Sermon Point 2 – The “bad guys” are Satan, Edom, Moab, and Ammon

Possible Sermon Point 3 – Conflict: the bad guys wanted to destroy Judah

Possible Sermon Point 4 – Jehoshaphat and Judah prayed, fasted, and praised God

Possible Sermon Point 5 – Resolution: God delivered Judah supernaturally

Possible Sermon Point 6 – “Jehoshaphat” means “the Lord is my judge!” The Lord will fight for His people and judge their enemies!

- **Step #6:** Select illustrations that demonstrate the homiletical idea

Illustration 1 – Decision involving ministry and school

Illustration 2 – Going from one rental home to another

Illustration 3 – The sale of two homes in different states

Illustration 4 – Dealing with church conflicts between members

- **Step #7:** Construct an attention-grabbing introduction and an appeal-provoking conclusion

Introduction: There are times when we face significant challenges and trials, which try us to the core. Have you ever faced a crisis that really tried your faith? (Use **illustrations 1-2**). These crises are opportunities to trust that the battle is not ours – the battle is God’s!

Conclusion: As we face great challenges and crises in our lives, let’s pray that God will help us to see them as faith opportunities to trust in Him. We should realize that, because we are God’s children, He will fight for us and prove His faithfulness to us! (Use **illustrations 3-4**). Let’s remember – the battle is not ours – it’s God’s!

Appeal: Are you facing a trial or crisis in your life? Do you need deliverance in some way? If so, remember that the Lord is your Judge! And as your Judge, He will fight your battles for you! **The battle is not yours – it is God’s battle!** Trust in Him to fight it for you! Will you willingly give your heart and life to Him right now, and trust in Him to fight for you?

- **Step #8** – Select a catchy, creative, interest-peak title based on the homiletical idea

Possible Title – “The Lord is our Judge!”

Possible Title – “Lessons from Jehoshaphat”

Possible Title – “The Battle is Not Ours – It’s Gods!”

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Lecture Seven: Foundation Stones: Developing a Sample Sermon, Part 3

Developing a Sermon – Eight “Foundation Stones”

- Discover and select a sermon topic or idea.
- Consider passages that discuss the topic and choose a main preaching passage.
- Faithfully exegete this passage to identify the *exegetical idea*, i.e. the author’s original meaning to the ancient congregation.
- Form the *homiletical idea* based on the universal spiritual principle of the exegetical idea, and construct a *sermon bullet*, i.e. a key phrase or statement summarizing the homiletical idea in a way that is easily remembered.
- Select and arrange main sermon points that discuss the homiletical idea.
- Select illustrations that demonstrate the homiletical idea.
- Construct an attention-grabbing introduction and an appeal-provoking conclusion.
- Select a catchy, creative, interest-peak title based on the homiletical idea.

NOTE: This lecture is a class exercise on discovering the exegetical idea, homiletical idea, and sermon bullet of a chosen preaching passage.

Developing a Sample Sermon

- **Step #1:** Select a single sermon topic – **The Passage of Philippians 3:1-14**
- **Step #2:** Choose a main preaching passage on the topic – **Philippians 3:1-14**
- **Step #3:** Discover the exegetical idea of the passage

Exegetical Idea:

- **Step #4:** Form the homiletical idea and sermon bullet of the passage

Homiletical Idea:

Possible Sermon Bullet:

APPENDIX C

EVALUATION FORMS

Christian Ministry Homiletics Grading Rubric For Preaching Form

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY HOMILETICS GRADING RUBRIC FOR PREACHING

NAME:

	Exceptional 90-100 Points	Proficient 60-89 Points	Satisfactory 50-59 Points	Unsatisfactory 0-49 Points	100% Points	Category Score
Introduction (10%)	Audience grabbed; main theme clear; Bible text very apparent. 9-10	Audience caught; main theme somewhat clear; Bible text apparent. 6-8.9	Audience here; main theme almost clear; Bible text somewhat apparent. 5-5.9	Audience wandering; main theme unclear; Bible text unclear. 0-4.9	10	
Scripture (10%)	Text(s) at very center of message; main points obviously derived from text(s). 9-10	Text(s) at center of message. Main points derived from text(s). 6-8.9	Text(s) in message. Main points somewhat derived from text(s). 5-5.9	Text(s) not the center of message. Main points not derived from text(s). 0-4.9	10	
Content & Application (30%)	Demonstrates excellent exegesis; contains creative illustrations; clear alliterations; outstanding research; analysis of pericope, structure & organization of sermon. Applications are inspiring, relevant, meaningful. Conclusion & Appeal are very clear and persuasive. 27-30	Demonstrates very good exegesis; illustrations, alliterations, research and analysis of pericope. Presents a very good structure & organization of the sermon. Applications are relevant and meaningful. Conclusion and appeal persuasive. 18-26.99	Demonstrates good exegesis, but lacks interesting illustrations; insightful research and analysis of pericope. Has acceptable structure and organization. Applications, conclusion and appeal are good. 15-17.99	Demonstrates poor exegesis; has little or no illustrations; lacks good exercise of research and analysis; structure and organization lacking; conclusion and appeal poor. 0-14.99	30	
Method, Form, Type, Mechanics, etc. (Narrative, Topical, Expository, Prophetic, Thematic, Deductive, Inductive, etc.) (20%)	Demonstrates excellent understanding and adherence to sermon definitions. Effective use of inductive and/or Deductive methods and is devoid of eisegesis or Proof-texting. No grammatical errors. No "urnms," "ahs," or other awkward hesitations. 18-20	Demonstrates very good understanding and adherence to sermon definitions. Clear use of inductive and/or Deductive method with little or no eisegesis or Proof-texting. Few grammatical errors. "urnms," "ahs," or other awkward hesitations. 12-17.99	Demonstrates good understanding and adherence to sermon definitions. Uses inductive and/or deductive method and has little or no eisegesis or Proof-texting. Many grammatical errors or "urnms," "ahs," or other awkward hesitations. 10-11.99	Shows mediocre understanding and adherence to sermon definitions; does not demonstrate creativity and good use of the forms, methods or types of preaching as discussed in class. Grammatical errors or "urnms," "ahs," or other awkward hesitations. 0-9.99	20	
Delivery & Style (20%)	Passion and flow is smooth; vocal variety was very helpful. Excellent employment of any of the styles of preaching. 18-20	Passion and flow is fairly smooth; vocal variety was helpful. Very good employment of any of the styles of preaching. 12-17.99	Passion and flow is rough; vocal variety was lacking. Good employment of any of the styles of preaching. 10-11.99	Passion and flow is lacking; vocal variety missing. Mediocre use of styles of preaching; voice and oral communication skills. 0-9.99	20	
Conclusion (10%)	The point is summed up clearly and concisely, and the challenge is clear. 9-10	The point is summed up concisely and there was a challenge. 6-8.9	The conclusion is unclear or there was little challenge. 5-5.9	The point is left hanging or no challenge. 0-4.9	10	
Total Score	90-100	60-89	50-59	0-49	100	

KNOXVILLE FIRST SERMON REFLECTION FORM

SPEAKER: _____

DATE: _____

SERMON TITLE: _____

Main Sermon Idea(s):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sermon Points:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Bible & EGW References:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Spiritual Insights:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sermon Content and Delivery Evaluation (please rate on a scale of 0-3)

Scale: 0 = Not at All; 1 = Somewhat; 2 = For the Most Part; 3 = Absolutely

1. Was the central/main idea of the sermon easy to identify? _____
2. Did the Bible verses and EGW references support the main idea? _____
3. Did the speaker's stories/illustrations support the main idea? _____
4. Did the speaker make an appeal to apply the sermon to real life? _____
5. Did the speaker appear confident and know his/her subject? _____
6. Was the speaker's use of voice and gestures easy to listen to? _____
7. Did the speaker speak at a pace (speed) that was easy to follow? _____
8. If the speaker used humor, was the humor appropriate? _____
9. Did the speaker appear angry, forceful, or condescending? _____
10. Did the speaker inspire conviction and hope in the message? _____

KNOXVILLE FIRST REVISED SERMON REFLECTION FORM

SPEAKER: _____

DATE: _____

SERMON TITLE: _____

PREACHING PASSAGE: _____

SERMON CONTENT AND DELIVERY EVALUATION (please rate on a scale of 0-5)

Scale – 0 = Not at All; 1 = Barely; 2 = Somewhat; 3 = Possibly; 4 = For the Most Part; 5 = Absolutely

Sermon Content

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Was the central idea (bullet) of the sermon clear? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Did the sermon reveal faithful exegesis of the preaching passage? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Did various sermon points support the central idea? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Did any stories or illustrations support the central idea? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Did the speaker make an appeal to apply the sermon to real life? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SCORE: ____/25

Sermon Delivery

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Did the speaker appear confident and know his/her subject? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Was the speaker's use of the voice easy to listen to? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Did the speaker speak at a pace (speed) that was easy to follow? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Were the speaker's non-verbal gestures appropriate? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Did the speaker inspire conviction and hope in the sermon? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SCORE: ____/25

TOTAL: ____/50

GRADE: ____%

SERMON STRENGTHS

- _____
- _____
- _____

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- _____
- _____
- _____

SEMINAR EVALUATION FORM

Seminar: Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church Preaching Discipleship Training Seminar

Title: “The Foolishness of Preaching: How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons”

Instructor: Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates

Date: _____

Note: Please respond to the statements below using the following rating scale: 0 = No Opinion; 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat Agree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

General Evaluation

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The seminar met my expectations. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The seminar content was very helpful. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The format of the seminar was effective. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The instructor had a good grasp of the material. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The seminar handouts/materials were very helpful. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The seminar sessions were reasonable in terms of time length. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The length of the overall seminar was reasonable. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The sermon evaluation forms were easy to use. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. The size of the class in terms of participants was just right. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. The pastoral mentoring team was helpful to me. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Phase One Evaluation

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The instructional lectures on preaching were very helpful. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The visual aids were professional and interesting. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The written outlines accurately summarized the material. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The instructor was open to questions and feedback. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The instructor thoroughly explained the required assignments. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Phase Two Evaluation

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The preaching practicum sessions were very helpful to me. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The debriefing/feedback sessions were very helpful to me. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. My preaching abilities improved during the seminar. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I learned important skills in evaluating myself and others. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Feedback on my preaching weaknesses was tactfully given. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Seminar Feedback Questions

1. Was the researcher/instructor clear as to what your exact responsibilities and requirements were during the training seminar?
2. What were the most useful elements of the seminar?
3. What changes should be made to improve the seminar?
4. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest), how would you rate the seminar overall?
5. Would you be interested in follow-up training in terms of continuing education to develop your preaching skills?

Note: The instructor would like to thank you for taking the time to give your honest feedback on the overall effectiveness of the preaching discipleship seminar. This feedback will be considered to improve later seminars in the future. The feedback provided on this evaluation form will remain anonymous and be locked in a secure location in the church office. Only the instructor will see its contents.

APPENDIX D

SPEAKING GIFT SURVEY

Do You Have the Spiritual Gift of Speaking?

Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates

Main Passage

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:10-11)

The Spiritual Gift of Speaking

The spiritual gift of “**speaking**” can be defined as the God-given ability to preach and teach spiritual principles in a convincing and authoritative way so as to have a spiritual impact on listeners. This ability is not to be confused with the talent of public speaking, which can be used in a non-Christian capacity. The spiritual gift of “speaking” is to be distinguished from the natural or learned ability of speaking because it involves public preaching and results in conversions to Christ and the spiritual edification of believers, and thus expands and strengthens the kingdom of God on earth.

There are three concepts in 1 Peter 4:10-11 that give insight into the gift of speaking. The first comes from the word “gift (vs. 10), which is **χάρισμα** (“charisma”) – a “free gift of grace.” The second comes from the word “speak” (vs. 11), which is **λαλέω** (“laleo”) – to “speak,” “talk,” or “proclaim.” The third comes from the phrase “oracles of God” (vs. 11), which is **λόγια θεοῦ** (“logia Theou”) – a “divine utterance of God.” These concepts show that “speaking” is defined as a spiritual gift that involves preaching, which God graciously imparts to certain individuals. This gift includes the public proclamation of God’s divine utterances from Scripture and results in the conversion and edification of believers through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Possible Presence of the Speaking Gift

To see if you might have a potential leaning toward the spiritual gift of speaking, please answer the following questions as honestly as possible, and use the following scale:

- 1 NEVER/NO
- 2 SELDOM/PROBABLY NOT
- 3 SOMETIMES/MAYBE
- 4 OFTEN/PROBABLY
- 5 ALWAYS/YES

1. I seem to feel somewhat comfortable when speaking in front of groups. ____
2. I seem to have the ability to engage in public communication effectively. ____
3. I seem to have the ability to motivate groups of people when I speak. ____
4. I seem to have the ability to exhort, teach, and console in my speaking. ____

5. I seem to be able to publicly proclaim Scripture in a clear and practical way. _____
6. I sense a divine burden to engage in a public preaching ministry in some capacity. _____

Several of the statements above are revised and based on concepts discussed from the publication, *A Personal Guide to Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts* (Siloam Springs, AR: Concerned Communications, 1989), and have been revised, reworded, and expanded for this specific survey. Once you have determined an accurate and honest numerical value for each statement, add up each of the numerical values from these six statements for a total score, and use the following grading scale below to determine if you have a possible leaning toward the spiritual gift of speaking:

TOTAL SCORE FROM QUESTIONS ABOVE: _____

- 1-5 NOT A SPIRITUAL GIFT
- 6-10 MOST LIKELY NOT A SPIRITUAL GIFT
- 11-15 PROBABLY NOT A SPIRITUAL GIFT
- 16-20 POSSIBLY A SPIRITUAL GIFT
- 21-25 MOST LIKELY A SPIRITUAL GIFT
- 26-30 A SPIRITUAL GIFT

Final Thoughts on Spiritual Gifts

The purpose of this survey is to provide some insight and guidance to see if you may have a leaning toward the speaking gift. Even if the results of this survey show that you might not have this gift, keep in mind that some spiritual gifts are developed and become apparent over time through the work of the Holy Spirit. Also, remember that other people (especially those who are closest to you who know you very well) might see a spiritual gift in you that you might not see in yourself! You should consider at least **EIGHT (8) important factors** in the process of discovering what your spiritual gifts are:

1. Study into the various gifts
2. Pray for God's guidance in the process of discovery
3. Identify skills and talents that show tendencies toward specific gifts
4. Identify spiritual interests and ministry burdens that require specific gifts
5. Seek guidance and counsel from discerning church members
6. Seek confirmation from the church body on the presence of gifts
7. Dedicate your gifts and talents to God's work and not for personal gain
8. Look for clear indications of success, i.e. the conversion and edification of believers, in your ministry efforts.

APPENDIX E

FINAL EXAM MATERIAL

How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons

Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates
Preaching Training Seminar Review – Final Exam

NAME _____

SCORE ____/100

PART ONE

Matching (please match each letter with the proper number) ____/20
20 points (2 points each)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ____ 1. Great Commission | A. A natural or developed ability used for God's glory |
| ____ 2. Remnant Message | B. Promise of Romans 10:13-15 |
| ____ 3. Priesthood of All Believers | C. Observation, instruction, application, and evaluation |
| ____ 4. Promise of the Holy Spirit | D. Public proclamation of the Gospel message |
| ____ 5. A Spiritual Gift | E. Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14:6-12 |
| ____ 6. A Talent | F. Promise of 1 Corinthians 1:17-24 |
| ____ 7. Gift of Speaking/Preaching | G. A divinely-imparted ability used for God's glory |
| ____ 8. Biblical Discipleship Model | H. Every believer has a role in sharing the Gospel |
| ____ 9. Foolishness of Preaching | I. Responsibility of taking the Gospel to the world |
| ____ 10. Preaching Brings Salvation | J. Promises of Luke 11:9-13 and Acts 1:8 |

PART TWO

Matching (please match each letter with the proper number) ____/20
20 points (2 points each)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| ____ 11. Narrative Preaching | K. Sermons that give a conclusion first and then prove it |
| ____ 12. Expository Preaching | L. Narrative, Law, Wisdom, Poetry, Apocalyptic, etc. |
| ____ 13. Thematic Preaching | M. Sermons that focus on doctrine and prophecy |
| ____ 14. Deductive Preaching | N. Convincing and converting to a Biblical principle |
| ____ 15. Inductive Preaching | O. The process of sermon discovery and development |
| ____ 16. Prophetic Preaching | P. Sermons on historical accounts/Biblical stories |
| ____ 17. Evangelistic Preaching | Q. Sermons on a particular theme or topic |
| ____ 18. Purpose of a Sermon | R. Sermons that unpack a Biblical passage |
| ____ 19. Homiletical Engine | S. Sermons on social justice that speak truth to power |
| ____ 20. Genres of Scripture | T. Sermons that unfold a conclusion progressively |

PART THREE

True or False (please put a "T" for true or "F" for false per each statement) ____/20
20 points (2 points each)

- ____ 21. Only professional clergy should serve in ministry because they are paid to minister.
____ 22. Homiletical Ideas come from Exegetical Ideas and are the basis for sermon bullets.
____ 23. Knowing the literary genre of a text is not a factor in discovering the Exegetical Idea.
____ 24. "Bring the text to our town" refers to a Bible writer's point to their ancient hearers.
____ 25. One's personal devotional life can have a direct influence on preaching effectiveness.
____ 26. Only professional clergy should serve in ministry because they are trained to minister.
____ 27. The Exegetical Idea of a text involves its original meaning to the original hearers.
____ 28. The Sermon Bullet is an easily-remembered phrase expressing the sermon idea.

- ____ 29. “Grasp the text in their town” refers to the universal, applicable principle of a text.
____ 30. The Homiletical Idea of a text involves applying a text’s meaning to modern hearers.

PART FOUR

Multiple Choice (please choose the best answer)
40 points (2 points each)

____/40

31. A sermon can be defined as

- (a) a Christ-centered discourse
- (b) a Scripture-based discourse
- (c) a doctrinally instructive discourse
- (d) a practical and relevant discourse
- (e) All of the above

32. Preaching can be defined as

- (a) a public proclamation
- (b) something that is spiritually effective
- (c) something that is Spirit-filled
- (d) something that motivates listeners to respond to Christ
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33. The two sermon principles of “convincing” and “converting” involve

- (a) demonstrating and proving a Scripture principle
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- (d) Points (a) and (b) above
- (e) None of the above

34. The discipleship principle of *observation* involves

- (a) learning ministry principles by watching others minister
- (b) learning ministry principles by direct teaching from experienced ministers
- (c) learning ministry principles by putting lessons learned into practice
- (d) learning ministry principles by assessing the effectiveness of ministry practices
- (e) None of the above

35. The discipleship principle of *instruction* involves

- (a) learning ministry principles by watching others minister
- (b) learning ministry principles by direct teaching from experienced ministers
- (c) learning ministry principles by putting lessons learned into practice
- (d) learning ministry principles by assessing the effectiveness of ministry practices
- (e) All of the above

36. The discipleship principle of *application* involves

- (a) learning ministry principles by watching others minister

- (b) learning ministry principles by direct teaching from experienced ministers
- (c) learning ministry principles by putting lessons learned into practice
- (d) learning ministry principles by assessing the effectiveness of ministry practices
- (e) None of the above

37. The discipleship principle of *evaluation* involves

- (a) learning ministry principles by watching others minister
- (b) learning ministry principles by direct teaching from experienced ministers
- (c) learning ministry principles by putting lessons learned into practice
- (d) learning ministry principles by assessing the effectiveness of ministry practices
- (e) All of the above

38. In sermon delivery, the Greek principle of *logos* teaches

- (a) the importance of how a sermon should appeal to the logic of the mind
- (b) the importance of how a sermon should appeal to the emotion of the heart
- (c) the importance of how a speaker should be likeable and a moral example
- (d) the importance of the opportune moment for making an appeal
- (e) None of the above

39. In sermon delivery, the Greek principle of *pathos* teaches

- (a) the importance of how a sermon should appeal to the logic of the mind
- (b) the importance of how a sermon should appeal to the emotion of the heart
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40. In sermon delivery, the Greek principle of *ethos* teaches

- (a) the importance of how a sermon should appeal to the logic of the mind
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41. In sermon delivery, the Greek principle of *kairos* teaches

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42. Sources of inspiration for sermon ideas can come from

- (a) spiritual insights from our personal experience with God
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- (c) the rise of a special need or challenge in the local congregation
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43. The Homiletical Engine for sermon development consists of

- (a) a contemplation of appropriate Bible texts that support a sermon idea
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- (d) spending quality time reflecting, organizing, and developing a sermon
- (e) All of the above

44. Which of the statements below best describes the Sermon Bullet:

- (a) This is the single, dominant, central idea of a message
- (b) This is expressed in a key catch phrase that is easily remembered
- (c) This should be repeated regularly during the sermon delivery
- (d) All of the above
- (e) None of the above

45. Which of the statements below best describes the Exegetical Idea of a text:

- (a) This involves the application of a textual principle to contemporary listeners
- (b) This involves preaching the sermon to audiences in a variety of venues
- (c) This involves wearing the appropriate attire, depending on one's audience
- (d) This involves discovering a Bible text's original meaning to its original audience
- (e) None of the above

46. Which of the statements below best describes the Homiletical Idea of a text:

- (a) This involves the application of a textual principle to contemporary listeners
- (b) This involves the practice of a consistent devotional life for effective sermons
- (c) This involves making the proper non-verbal gestures when delivering a sermon
- (d) This involves discovering a Bible text's original meaning to its original audience
- (e) All of the above

47. The Audio Code of the sermon delivery includes

- (a) the avoidance of condescension and confrontation when delivering sermons
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- (a) using appropriate non-verbal gestures and expressions
- (b) dressing in a manner appropriate to both audience and venue
- (c) avoiding theatrical display and proper physical movements
- (d) using proper visual aids in an elevated manner when appropriate
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- (a) not worry about how many people will respond
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- (c) use hand-raising, standing, altar calls, or decision cards
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- (e) All of the above

50. Which of the statements below apply to consistent, effective devotional habits:

- (a) taking special time daily for secret, personal prayer
- (b) taking special time daily for personal Bible study
- (c) taking special time daily for spiritual reflection
- (d) they have a direct influence on the effectiveness of preaching
- (e) All of the above

EXTRA CREDIT QUESTIONS

For a sermon to be truly effective, it must (2 points)

____/2

- (a) be based upon Scripture, so that the Bible speaks to the people
- (b) be Christ-centered and emphasize the gift of salvation in some way
- (c) be applicable and relevant to real life in a practical way
- (d) encourage some sort of listener response through an appeal
- (e) All of the above

Order the Eight Sermon Foundation Stones (1 point each)

____/8

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| ____ Step #1 | A. Select and organize key points that support the sermon idea |
| ____ Step #2 | B. Select a catchy, creative, interest-peaking title per the sermon idea |
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| ____ Step #8 | H. Formulate the homiletical idea and sermon bullet |

How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons
Pastor Marcus A. Swearingen Bates
Preaching Training Seminar Review – Final Exam Answer Sheet

NAME _____

SCORE ____/100

PART ONE

Matching (please match each letter with the proper number) ____/20
20 points (2 points each)

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|--|
| I__ | 1. Great Commission | A. A natural or developed ability used for God's glory |
| E__ | 2. Remnant Message | B. Promise of Romans 10:13-15 |
| H__ | 3. Priesthood of All Believers | C. Observation, instruction, application, and evaluation |
| J__ | 4. Promise of the Holy Spirit | D. Public proclamation of the Gospel message |
| G__ | 5. A Spiritual Gift | E. Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14:6-12 |
| A__ | 6. A Talent | F. Promise of 1 Corinthians 1:17-24 |
| D__ | 7. Gift of Speaking/Preaching | G. A divinely-imparted ability used for God's glory |
| C__ | 8. Biblical Discipleship Model | H. Every believer has a role in sharing the Gospel |
| F__ | 9. Foolishness of Preaching | I. Responsibility of taking the Gospel to the world |
| B__ | 10. Preaching Brings Salvation | J. Promises of Luke 11:9-13 and Acts 1:8 |

PART TWO

Matching (please match each letter with the proper number) ____/20
20 points (2 points each)

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|---|
| P__ | 11. Narrative Preaching | K. Sermons that give a conclusion first and then prove it |
| R__ | 12. Expository Preaching | L. Narrative, Law, Wisdom, Poetry, Apocalyptic, etc. |
| Q__ | 13. Thematic Preaching | M. Sermons that focus on doctrine and prophecy |
| K__ | 14. Deductive Preaching | N. Convincing and converting to a Biblical principle |
| T__ | 15. Inductive Preaching | O. The process of sermon discovery and development |
| S__ | 16. Prophetic Preaching | P. Sermons on historical accounts/Biblical stories |
| M__ | 17. Evangelistic Preaching | Q. Sermons on a particular theme or topic |
| N__ | 18. Purpose of a Sermon | R. Sermons that unpack a Biblical passage |
| O__ | 19. Homiletical Engine | S. Sermons on social justice that speak truth to power |
| L__ | 20. Genres of Scripture | T. Sermons that unfold a conclusion progressively |

PART THREE

True or False (please put a "T" for true or "F" for false per each statement) ____/20
20 points (2 points each)

- | | |
|-----|--|
| F__ | 21. Only professional clergy should serve in ministry because they are paid to minister. |
| T__ | 22. Homiletical Ideas come from Exegetical Ideas and are the basis for sermon bullets. |
| F__ | 23. Knowing the literary genre of a text is not a factor in discovering the Exegetical Idea. |
| F__ | 24. "Bring the text to our town" refers to a Bible writer's point to their ancient hearers. |
| T__ | 25. One's personal devotional life can have a direct influence on preaching effectiveness. |
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EXTRA CREDIT QUESTIONS

For a sermon to be truly effective, it must (2 points)

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- (a) be based upon Scripture, so that the Bible speaks to the people
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- (c) be applicable and relevant to real life in a practical way
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Order the Eight Sermon Foundation Stones (1 point each)

____/8

- | | |
|---------------|---|
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APPENDIX F

SEMINAR EVALUATION DATA

Final Seminar Grades for Training Participants

Participant	Sermon #1 Average*	Sermon #2 Average*	Sermon #3 Average*	Final Exam Score	Final Grade
1	92	94	97	95	95
2	91	94	94	86	91
3	91	95	98	98	96
4	85	90	98	101	92
5	87	89	91	105	93
6	92	100	97	102	98
7	95	84	95	104	93
8	94	94	91	104	96
9	89	95	N/A	107	97**
10	88	92	95	110	96
Alternate 1	92	N/A	N/A	103	98**
Alternate 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A**

*This score is an average between participant and pastoral mentor grades.

**This participant did not complete the three required sermons.

SEMINAR EVALUATION FORM – FINAL RESULTS

Seminar: Knoxville First Church Preaching Discipleship Training Seminar

Seminar Title: “The Foolishness of Preaching: How to Discover, Develop, and Deliver Effective Sermons”

Instructor: Pastor Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates

Note: Please respond to the statements below using the following rating scale: 0 = No Opinion; 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat Agree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

General Evaluation

Ave. Score

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. The seminar met my expectations. | 4.5 |
| 2. The seminar content was very helpful. | 4.7 |
| 3. The format of the seminar was effective. | 4.4 |
| 4. The instructor had a good grasp of the material. | 5.0 |
| 5. The seminar handouts and materials were very helpful. | 4.7 |
| 6. The seminar sessions were reasonable in terms of time length. | 4.2 |
| 7. The overall length of the seminar was reasonable. | 3.9 |
| 8. The sermon evaluation forms were easy to use. | 3.6 |
| 9. The size of the class in terms of participants was just right. | 4.1 |
| 10. The pastoral mentoring team was helpful to me. | <u>3.5</u> |

General Evaluation Average **4.3/5 (86%)**

Phase One Evaluation

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. The instructional lectures on preaching were very helpful. | 4.4 |
| 2. The visual aids were professional and interesting. | 4.8 |
| 3. The written outlines accurately summarized the material. | 4.9 |
| 4. The instructor was open to questions and feedback. | 5.0 |
| 5. The instructor thoroughly explained the required assignments. | <u>4.8</u> |

Phase One Evaluation Average **4.8/5 (96%)**

Phase Two Evaluation

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. The preaching practicum sessions were very helpful to me. | 4.8 |
| 2. The debriefing/feedback sessions were very helpful to me. | 4.4 |
| 3. My preaching abilities improved during the seminar. | 4.6 |
| 4. I learned important skills in evaluating myself and others. | 4.5 |
| 5. Feedback on my preaching weaknesses was tactfully given. | <u>4.7</u> |

Phase Two Evaluation Average **4.6/5 (92%)**

Overall Evaluation Average – (86% + 96% + 92%)/3 = 91%

Seminar Feedback Questions

1. Was the researcher/instructor clear as to what your exact responsibilities and requirements were during the training seminar?
 - Yes, from all participants.
 - Suggestion – the sermon evaluation form could have been explained and clarified.
 - Suggestion – seminar goals were not explained until the end (preaching in church).
 - Suggestion – preaching dates kept getting pushed back (scheduling challenges).
2. What were the most useful elements of the seminar?
 - The practicum portion – practice makes perfect.
 - How to research and write a sermon; experience presenting from the church pulpit.
 - The EGW references for clarity on preaching styles (what's appropriate), and the one-on-one meetings to go over individual sermons.
 - Practice preaching and feedback.
 - Getting used to being up front.
 - Understanding the nature of a sermon; being able to practice and receive feedback.
 - Instructional classes and opportunities to preach.
 - Learning about the sermon bullet and going from their town to our town.
 - Personal instruction from the instructor on sermon development so that things could be explained in greater detail.
 - Sermon preparation.
 - Instructional lectures and PPT presentations were helpful.
 - Listening to comments and questions from trainees was helpful.
 - The sermons of the other students were the most helpful parts of the seminar.
 - Feedback from the sermons was also helpful.
3. What changes should be made to improve the seminar?
 - Restructure the sermon evaluation sheets.
 - Assign sermon types (one free for personal style and two other assigned sermons).
 - Less participants – 5 max.
 - Training sermons – 15 minutes max.
 - Start meetings on time; 2.5 hours max.
 - Seminar should last only 3 months.
 - Start at the first of the year, not in spring to go through summer months.
 - Continued meetings after the seminar to work on sermons.
 - Have another class (2.0!) for those who want it.

- It is great that some of us will eventually preach in churches.
 - Better evaluation forms and more verbal feedback.
 - Less focus on big words and more sermon building practice during the lectures.
 - Shorter seminar length; not conducted during summer months.
 - One-hour meetings on Sabbath afternoon.
 - More direct instruction on exegesis and homiletics.
 - For college students, no changes; for lay preachers, more simplified material, with fewer or no references to Greek language concepts.
 - Scary to preach a 30-minute sermon; it worked well, but perhaps a shorter time requirement for preaching sermons.
 - Smaller size class; reduce class size
 - More information on what material would be helpful to use in giving sermons.
 - Handling specific sermon types, topics, and presentation assignments.
 - More in-depth training; review session; class discussion session at the halfway point.
 - Break-down how to develop a sermon (no rush in this aspect of training).
 - Have a team of mentors assigned to specific students (intentional partnering).
 - Mentors should be required to give post-sermon feedback and evaluations.
 - Make trainees aware of the excessive time requirements of this seminar.
 - Clearer protocol on feedback from peers after sermon preparations
4. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest), how would you rate the seminar overall?
- 8 – good and exceeded expectations; not 9 or 10 because of lack of consistent attendance and participant feedback.
 - 7
 - 9.5
 - 10 – very awesome and too important not to continue.
 - 8
 - 8
 - 9
 - 10
 - 9
 - 10
 - 9
 - **Average – 8.9**
5. Would you be interested in follow-up training in terms of continuing education to develop your preaching skills?
- Yes
 - No
 - Yes
 - Yes (if I'm still around)

- No
- Yes
- Yes (perhaps at a later time)
- Whatever the Lord requires, I will do
- Maybe
- Yes
- Yes

APPENDIX G

SCRIPTURE INDEX

SCRIPTURE INDEX

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VITA

VITA

Name:	Marcus Alden Swearingen Bates
Background:	I was born on June 10, 1968 in Valdosta, Georgia, and raised in Bath and North Anson, Maine by my mother and father. I grew up in a nominal Christian home with two sisters and a brother who is deceased (2005). I was baptized in a Christian church at the age of 11 (1979), and was re-baptized as a Seventh-day Adventist at the age of 27 (1996).
Family:	I was married on December 10, 2000 to Sarah Liesel Clark of Miami, Florida. We have three children, Abigail Faye (born 2003), Jonathan Alden (born 2005), and Samantha Eden (born 2007).
Education:	
2015-2019	Doctor of Ministry – Homiletics/Preaching Andrews University (Berrien Springs, MI)
2002-2015	M.A. in Evangelism & Biblical/Theological Studies Southern Adventist University (Collegedale, TN)
2006-2013	M.A. in Ancient/Classical History American Military University (Charles Town, WV)
1986-1991	B.A. in Anthropology & History University of Maine (Orono, ME)
1984-1986	H.S. Diploma Carrabec High School (North Anson, ME)
Ordained:	I was ordained in the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in 2006. I have a ministerial credential with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
Experience:	I have served in the Seventh-day Adventist ministry for 20 years (1999-2019). Conferences include Florida (1999-2007), Carolina (2007-2014), Chesapeake (2015-2017), and Georgia-Cumberland (2017-2019). My pastoral duties include giving Bible studies, discipleship training, member visitation, preaching, teaching, and various administrative duties. I have also held 49 evangelistic meetings, including an international meeting in Cuba (2016).
2017-Present	Senior Pastor, Knoxville First Seventh-day Adventist Church (TN)

2015-2017	Senior Pastor, Hagerstown Seventh-day Adventist Church (MD)
2012-2014	Pastor, Mills River/Brevard Seventh-day Adventist churches (NC)
2007-2012	Pastor, Hickory Seventh-day Adventist Church (NC)
2003-2007	Pastor, Plymouth-Sorrento Seventh-day Adventist Company (FL)
1999-2007	Evangelist, Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

